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WILLIAM TYNDALE.

(From the painting in Hertford College, Oxford.)

WILLIAM TYNDALE

A Biography

A CONTRIBUTION TO

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE

BY THE

REV. R. DEMAUS M.A.

AUTHOR OF "HUGH LATIMER: A BIOGRAPHY"

NEW EDITION, REVISED

BY

RICHARD LOVETT M.A.

WITH PORTRAIT AND FACSIMILES

London

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY

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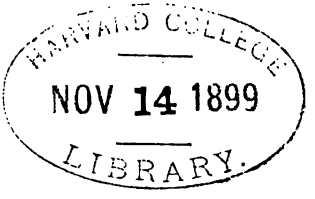

Walker fund

"I call God to recorde agaynst the day we shall appeare before our Lord Jesus, to geue a reckenyng of our doynges, that I neuer altered one syllable of God's Word agaynst my conscience, nor would this day, if all that is in the earth, whether it be pleasure, honour, or riches, might be geuen me."

Tyndale's Letter to Fryth.

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE high estimation in which Demaus's *William Tyndale* is held by students of the history of the English Bible is a proof of the sterling value of the work. Demaus wrote out of a full knowledge and his task was a labour of love. Hence it was but natural that the book should at once become the standard authority on the subject, which it is now admitted on all hands to be.

In the fifteen years which have passed since the book was first published Tyndale's reputation has been steadily growing in popular esteem. By an ever-widening circle of reverent admirers he is recognised as one of England's greatest benefactors. Indeed there are not lacking those who consider him to be the one man to whom modern Englishmen owe the largest debt of gratitude. London, never too prone to make haste in such matters, has at length on one of her most conspicuous sites erected a statue to the man who lived and toiled as an exile and who died as a martyr that his countrymen might have the Bible in their mother tongue.

One form in which the perennial interest felt in all relating to the Bible in England manifests itself is the constant search after fresh details connected with the history of its translation into English, and after new facts in the lives of the men who did the work. It is doubtful whether we shall ever get to know much more of the personal history of Tyndale than we do at present. Yet from time to time scraps of information are added to the accumulated stock. One such has recently been given to the world in the valuable *Register of the University of Oxford*, edited for the Oxford Historical Society by the Rev. C. W. Boase, M.A. Mr. Boase has not only placed at my disposal his valuable Preface to the volume, but he has also furnished me with his translations of the entries in the *Register* referring to Tyndale. The entries are:—

(1) 13 May, 1512, supplicat Willelmus Hychyns scolaris artium quatenus studium duorum (annorum) cum termino infra universitatem cum responsione uni bacillario in quadragesima cum creatione unius generalis et duabus variationibus in Parviso et oppositione et responsione racione officii collectoris in Parviso sufficiat etc. Hec est

concessa (ita) quod determinet proxima quadragesima et bis disputet preter formam.

[*Translation.*] "13 May, 1512, William Hychyns, scholar in arts, supplicates that a study of two years and a term within the University, together with a *responsion* to one bachelor in Lent, and the creation of one *general*[1] and with two *variations*[2] in the Parvise[3], and an *opposition* and *responsion* under a Collector in the Parvise, may suffice him to be admitted to the degree of bachelor. This grace is granted on condition of his determining next Lent, and disputing twice out of the usual course."

(2) 4 July, 1512, admissus est ad lecturam alicuius libri decretalium [a mistake for *facultatis artium*, the admissions to read the Decretals occur previously] dominus Jo. Knygley . . . . . dominus[4] Willelmus Hychyns . . . . .

[*Translation.*] "4 July, 1512, there was admitted to the reading of some book of the Decretals [a mistake for 'of the faculty of arts'] Sir [dominus] John Knygley . . . . . Sir William Hychyns . . . ."

(3) Nomina determinatorum Feb. 1512 (i.e. $151\frac{3}{5}$) . . . . . dominus Willelmus Hychens (53 names).

[*Translation.*] "Feb. $151\frac{3}{5}$ names of determiners . . . . . Sir William Hychyns [53 names]."

(4) 26 June, 1515, licentiati sunt in artibus dominus Willelmus Hychyns . . . .

[*Translation.*] "26 June, 1515, there were licensed in arts Sir William Hychyns . . . ."

(5) 2 July, 1515, creati sunt in artibus magistri quorum nomina sequuntur dominus . . . . . Mr. Willelmus Hochyns (22 names).

[*Translation.*] "2 July, 1515, there were created Masters of Arts those whose names follow . . . . . Mr. William Hochyns (22 names)."

The reader unacquainted with the formalities accompanying the granting of degrees at Oxford in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries will find these entries more than a trifle obscure. Yet their discovery fixes in all probability some of the most important dates in Tyndale's life.

[1] On these formalities see Wordsworth's *Scholae Academicae*, pp. 213–234. "Generals" were exercises of the juniors in easy logic, *Parva Logicalia*. See Gutch's edition of Wood's *History and Antiquities of the University*, Vol. II. p. 728.

[2] "Variations" etc. are technical names for different sorts of disputations. Everything was done by Opponents and Respondents. The Collectors arranged the disputations, who was to dispute with whom, and where, etc.

[3] The "Parvise" was the church porch of St. Mary's.

[4] A man was called *dominus* before his M.A., *magister* afterwards. Hence "Dan" or "Sir" prefixed to clerical names.

For the benefit of the general reader it may be expedient to add a brief description of a sixteenth century University career. It will not only help to render the extracts from the *Register* intelligible but it will throw light upon certain passages in Tyndale's writings.

But before doing this it should be stated that, although no satisfactory reason can be given for it, the fact remains that Tyndale described himself and was known to his contemporaries as William Hychyns or Hutchens, and this seems to have been his family name. Granting that the entry quoted from the Oxford *Register* refers to Tyndale—and the probability that it does comes very near to a certainty—the discovery is a proof of the general accuracy of Demaus's reasoning, for he shows on page 35 that Tyndale could not have graduated B.A. before 1508, and the *Register* fixes the year as 1512.

Notwithstanding the researches of such writers as Anstey in his Introduction to the *Munimenta Academica Oxon.* and Mullinger in his book *The University of Cambridge*,—to both of which works the Editor would here acknowledge his great indebtedness,—there is still considerable uncertainty as to the exact details of a University course in the time of Tyndale. Becoming a Bachelor of Arts did not imply, as now, the conference of a degree; it seems rather to have indicated the conclusion of a term of study. The successful candidate ceased to be a schoolboy, but he was not yet considered fully fit to undertake the instruction of others.

In the Arts course the first subject studied was grammar, that is, Latin, and the books used were the writings of Priscian, Terence and Boethius; in Tyndale's day readings from Virgil or Ovid were probably added, together with some study of Latin versification. By far the most important subject of study was logic. The text book was the *Summulae* of Petrus Hispanus, the lecturer also making free use of such commentaries as that of Duns Scotus. Attention was also paid to rhetoric and arithmetic. In these labours four years were spent, and during this time, probably in the course of the second year, the student passed "responsions." Until this time, according to Mr. Anstey's account, he was known as a *Sophista generalis*, afterwards as a *questionist*. Early in his logical course the student would be encouraged to attend the disputations in the Schools, and Mr. Mullinger thinks that it was only after he had completed his course of logic and was entitled to take part in the disputations that he became a *Sophista generalis*. After this he was allowed to appear as a public disputant and it seems to have been compulsory for him to take at least two "responsions" and "opponencies," that is, the defensive and offensive parts respectively in two public disputations.

At the end of his fourth year of study he proceeded to the important work of "determination." He had first to get six Masters of Arts to testify to his fitness in attainments, character and age, and they had sometimes, it would seem, to affirm that the appearance and stature of the candidate were satisfactory. Four other Masters of Arts were appointed whose duty it was to judge this testimony. The six Masters appeared in Congregation before these four, and if their testimony was found satisfactory the candidate then took an oath that he had finished the needful studies and had passed "responsions." It was at this point that the risk of rejection appeared. The ancient practice differed very considerably from the modern. Failure to "determine" the knotty logical problems propounded did not involve the rejection of the candidate. It may have brought ridicule and disgrace upon him, but it did not prevent him from proceeding to the degree of Master of Arts. The "plucked" scholar was the one who could not take the oath in the Congregation of the masters or whose character was such that he could find no six masters who would bear testimony to his fitness.

Mr. Boase in his Preface to the *Register*, p. viii, thus describes the latter part of a sixteenth century University course :—

"In the Lent after a man was admitted to his Bachelor of Arts degree he 'determined,' i.e., instead of disputing himself he presided over disputations, and gave out his determination or decision on the questions discussed. The proctors chose two *Collectors*, who distributed the determining bachelors into equal classes and allotted to each of them the School in which he was to determine, on a fixed day, from one o'clock till five o'clock in the afternoon. Each year, after determining, the bachelor had further to dispute as opponent or respondent at Austin disputations (so called because formerly held in the Augustinian monastery), as arranged by similar Collectors, and the questions to be discussed were fixed up on the Schools' gates. He had also to *read*, i.e., lecture on, certain books in a *cursory* manner (subsidiary to the main lectures) before he could become a licentiate in arts. We have a list (in Anstey's *Munimenta*, 413) of the books read, which runs thus :—

"Metaphysics, for one year.

"Ethics, for four months.

"Geometry, for five weeks.

"Algorismus, Sphaera, Compotus, eight days apiece.

"Boethius' Arithmetica, for three weeks.

"Priscian in the large volume, or Politics, or the Ten Books on Animals (including the books on the movements of Animals), for six weeks.

"Priscian on the construction of the parts of speech, for one term.

"The book *Caeli et Mundi*, one term.

"The book *Meteororum* (Metheororum), one term.

"The fourth book of the Topics of Boethius, etc.

"The candidate for the degree of M.A. had further to go round (*circuit*) the Schools and beg the masters to attend his exercises, called Vesperies, the Saturday evening before the final ceremony. When the bachelor, after having been licensed, was finally created master, the Chancellor handed him the *insignia* of the degree (book, hood and cap), admitted him to teach in the name of the Trinity, and gave him a kiss on his left cheek. He was thus said to *incept* or commence as a master, and the term *Commencement* is still used at Cambridge for what at Oxford is called the *Act*. There were two, and sometimes three, Acts in a year. Different forms were used for the admission to each in different subjects. Thus a Bachelor of Divinity was admitted to read the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, a Bachelor of Music to read the mathematical verses of Boethius, a Bachelor of Physic the aphorisms of Hippocrates, a Bachelor of Civil Law the institutes of Justinian. Thenceforth the master could give the *ordinary* lectures. But for fifteen days he had to walk through the streets in a round cap, not a plaited cap (*capa rotunda* not *rugata*). The new masters had to make presents to the Regents, i.e., the masters of less than two years' standing; and, if they were rich, a feast was expected."

Through a course of this kind, crowned by a series of formalities like those just described, "William Tyndale, otherwise called Hychins," had to pass. Of real education, in the modern sense, there was little. A high development of the logical faculty with a dearth of scholarship was all that the Oxford of those days could give. Tyndale's opinions upon the value and results of such a course of training are given in his own vigorous style in his *Practice of Prelates*, and are quoted in this volume on pp. 35 and 36.

In the *Register* there is also a reference to Gabriel Donne, one of the men concerned in the plot that led to Tyndale's martyrdom. He was a Cistercian friar and supplicated for the degree of Bachelor of Divinity Oct. 26th, 1521.

The editor has recently come into possession of some notes which Mr. Demaus had prepared for a second edition of his book. Unfortunately the first few sheets had been printed before the existence of these notes was known. They do not contain matter of very great importance, and yet raise such points of interest, as the following:—

(1) The evidence seems all tending in favour of the view that Melksham Court in the parish of Stinchcombe and not Hunt's

Court, North Nibley, was the home of Tyndale's family. Demaus in his MS. notes states that the will of Alice Hunt, the "legal deed" referred to on p. 19, dated Jan. 20, 1542, runs, "Alice Tyndale .... leaves something to her son Richard and his heirs, with remainder to her third son *William* and the heirs of his body, remainder to Henry—to Thomas—to John." Hence this William was not the martyr.

With reference to this, Mr. Francis Fry, of Cotham, Bristol, in a note extracted from Mr. Cooke's paper on *The Tyndales of Gloucester*, states, "It seems therefore fair to conclude with Mr. Greenfield that Edward Tyndale and William the Martyr were in all probability brothers of the first Richard Tyndale of Melksham Court, to whom we may add a fourth brother, viz. John Tyndale, a Merchant of London, who was fined by the Star Chamber in 1530 for assisting William in the circulation of the New Testament."

(2) Demaus notes that Mr. Aldis Wright has accidentally discovered what is almost certainly the true date of Sir Thomas More's birth, viz. Feb. 7th, 1478 (see Appendix to Seebohm's *Oxford Reformers*, *second* edition).

This adds fresh force to Tyndale's statement about More quoted on p. 24, "he understandeth the Greek, and he knew them *long ere I*," especially in the light of the Oxford *Register* entries; for Tyndale can hardly have been born before 1490, or even, as Mr. Boase thinks, before 1495. If this be so, More was from twelve to eighteen years older than the translator.

(3) Demaus notes that the words "youthful enthusiast" on p. 85 and "youth" on p. 86 are hardly correct. According to his own view Tyndale was then 40 years of age, and even if we accept Mr. Boase's estimate, he was 30.

The other notes have been incorporated as far as possible in the body of this volume.

The most valuable recent contribution to Tyndale literature is Mr. Francis Fry's *Bibliographical Description of the Editions of the New Testament* (1878), in which the sequence of the early editions of Tyndale's Testament is clearly set forth. It has done the work referred to by Demaus as unaccomplished at page 357 of this volume. The most interesting fact brought to light is the identification of the last edition revised by Tyndale himself, viz. No. 4 in Mr. Fry's list, an edition usually described as the 1535–34 "G. H." New Testament. The name of the printer and publisher and the place of printing of this edition have been the subject of much conjecture and discussion. We have no space to go fully into these matters here, but must refer the reader to Mr. Fry's work. The late Mr. Henry Bradshaw of Cambridge, in

a paper contributed to the first number of *The Bibliographer*, demonstrates that it was *published* by Godfried Van der Haghen of Antwerp, though he dissents from the view that the printer was the man "whose name appears as Martin de Keyser when the book [printed by him] is in his native language, as Martinus Cæsar or Cæsaris when the book is in Latin, as Martin Lempereur when in French, and, lastly, as Martin Emperowr when in English."

Mr. Bradshaw in the same paper shows conclusively that the translator himself spelt his name "Tindale," but it has been thought better in the present edition to keep to the old familiar spelling of the name.

An effort has been made to render this volume still more interesting and useful to the student by giving specimen facsimiles that shall convey to the reader, as far as practicable without going to great expense, the exact appearance of the most precious of Tyndale's books as they now present themselves to the eye of the reader. To give as nearly as possible the impression of the originals, the facsimiles are in every case the exact size of the books from which they are taken, and no description is printed on the plates; that is fully given in the List of Illustrations on page 14. The old edition contained facsimile pages of the octavo 1525 Testament now at Bristol, reproduced from tracings lent by Mr. Fry, F.S.A. The present contains the following reproductions of the most precious volumes in the English language: (1) A page of the unique Grenville Fragment, the first part of the New Testament printed in English, especially interesting for its glosses, the lower one of which describes in the words "worketh freely for love's sake only" the spirit in which Tyndale served his day and generation: (2) a page of the octavo 1525 Testament reproduced from the copy in the Library of St. Paul's Cathedral: (3) two pages from the only known *perfect* copy of Tyndale's 1530 Pentateuch, now in the Grenville Library, British Museum; one page from the Book of Numbers showing the old black letter in which that book and Genesis are printed, and illustrating Tyndale's irony in the pointed gloss over against Balaam's question; the other from the Book of Exodus showing the Roman letter in which Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy are printed, and giving one of the cuts which, according to Hall's story, the Bishop of London's money went to pay for, and which (see p. 217) had been previously used in Vostermann's Dutch Bible of 1528: (4) a specimen page of Joye's pirated edition of Tyndale's Testament, illustrating his peculiar views on the resurrection: (5) a page of Tyndale's 1534 revised Testament, printed at Antwerp on yellow paper: (6) a page from the original edition of the *Parable of the Wicked Mammon.* (7) The title-page of the famous *Practice of Prelates.*

Mr. Francis Fry, of Cotham, Bristol, in a letter dated Aug. 25th, 1886, sent the editor a copy of the title-page facsimiled at p. 352. He writes, "It is a great curiosity. It is a *remarkable* fact that there is no record of the edition now more than 300 years old." Mr. Fry finds that the *volume* in which the title-page is found is a copy of the Mole edition of 1536. Mr. Fry states, "Though no part of a New Testament of this date (i. e. 1536), we may suppose it to be the title of an edition. This is no doubt by William Tyndale. There is no title in either of the two copies of the first edition, [nor in the Grenville Fragment]. This title shows that in the year 1532 the New Testament is styled "in Englyshe Translated." In 1534 the edition printed in Antwerp by Martin Emperour is described as "dylygently corrected." The three lines under the headline probably ran "ment in Englyshe translated after the Greek Contayninge these bokes." This title is therefore a very interesting relic of the early editions of Tyndale's New Testament, and may possibly be the same as the lost titles of the 1525 editions."

A reproduction of the Vilvorde letter, the only specimen of Tyndale's handwriting in existence, is given at p. 437.

The old portrait, which was a very bad reproduction of the picture in the possession of the British and Foreign Bible Society, has been replaced by a fine engraving of the head of the picture of Tyndale which now hangs in the hall of Hertford College, Oxford.

An exhaustive index has also been compiled, which renders the contents of the present edition readily accessible to those who may wish to consult it on special points.

The size of the page has been somewhat increased, and it is hoped that in its more attractive form the volume may long continue to interest both the student and the general reader in the life and work of one of the noblest of Englishmen.

It only remains to express the editor's grateful acknowledgments for the kind help freely rendered by all to whom he has applied or with whom the work has brought him into relation. He is especially indebted to the Rev. C. W. Boase, M.A., of Exeter College, Oxford; to Mr. Bullen and Mr. Fletcher, of the British Museum; to Mr. Francis Fry, F.S.A., of Cotham, Bristol; to Dr. Sparrow Simpson, Sub-Dean and Librarian of St. Paul's Cathedral; and to Mr. Gairdner, of the Record Office.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

CONSIDERING the profound and universal reverence which Englishmen entertain for their noble vernacular Bible, it is somewhat strange that so little care has been bestowed upon the accurate investigation of the literary history of that great work, and the career of the man whose name must ever be associated with it. It is only, indeed, within the present generation that the history of the English Bible has been treated with anything like adequate attention: our older writers abound in careless and erroneous statements on the subject, which our literary historians unfortunately continue to repeat without inquiry; and even now, after the patient reseaches of Anderson, Westcott, Fry, and others, much still remains to be done in this long-neglected department of literature.

As for Tyndale, till the publication of Anderson's *Annals of the English Bible*, some thirty years ago, it can hardly be said that anything more was known of him than what had been recorded in Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*. The biography of Tyndale by the old Martyrologist, if somewhat defective, was eminently valuable. For it is evident to any one who takes the trouble to examine the earliest edition of the *Acts and Monuments*, that Foxe derived his information from men who had been intimately associated with Tyndale in those two periods of his life whose history he has recorded. The value of Foxe's narrative, so far as it goes, is thus placed beyond the reach of dispute; it has been accordingly accepted in the present work as the testimony of thoroughly well-informed contemporaries; and, notwithstanding its mutilated condition, it might have been of admirable service as a nucleus, round which the labours of succeeding writers might have formed a complete and worthy biography. Nothing, however, in this direction was seriously attempted, till Anderson published what had been at first designed to be a Life of Tyndale, though it was subsequently, and, perhaps, injudiciously, extended into the well-known *Annals of the English Bible*.

Anderson's work, though by no means free from faults even of a serious kind, was a most valuable contribution to our knowledge of the Life of Tyndale and of the History of the English Bible; and the present writer has to express in the strongest terms his obligation to

the labours of his predecessor in the same field. A similar acknowledgment is due to the edition of Tyndale's works so carefully superintended for the Parker Society by Professor Walter. The facsimiles of Mr. Fry and the manuscript collections of the late George Offor have also in various ways proved useful; and the charming treatise of Canon Westcott on the English Bible has never been consulted without profit, or indeed without envy.

Whilst thus freely availing himself of the researches of previous writers, the author has in no case transferred their statements to his own pages till he has carefully investigated and verified them. No assertion has been taken for granted; everything has been examined afresh; the originals have been consulted and deliberately weighed, it is hoped, without the distorting influence of any theory; the localities associated with the life of Tyndale have been personally visited and explored; and especial care has been devoted throughout to the exact determination, so far as possible, of the precise dates of all the occurrences in the Biography. Thus, although there still remain, in the story of Tyndale's life, gaps where all information fails us, which we can only attempt to bridge over by the help of conjectures and probabilities, it is believed that in the following pages there is laid down a firm basis of fact, which no subsequent investigation will overthrow, and into which any future discovery will fit with the ease and harmony which belong to truth. In addition to the thorough sifting of what had been previously known, the writer has been able to shed fresh light upon various obscure passages in Tyndale's life by researches in the State Paper Office (which, for some reason or other, is not so accessible to the public at this portion of our history as it ought to be): and of the closing occurrences of Tyndale's career, a clear and satisfactory narrative is here for the first time presented to the English reader, the result of investigations amongst the archives of Brussels and other cities of Belgium.

Thanks are due to many friends for assistance and sympathy kindly rendered during the prosecution of the work, and especially to one to whom everything connected with the history of the English Bible is a matter of lively interest, Mr. Francis Fry, of Bristol. From many generous men of letters in Belgium also, an amount of help has been received, for which the warmest thanks are a poor acknowledgment: but for the aid of M. Gachard, the Archivist-General of Belgium, M. Galesloot, M. Genard, of Antwerp, M. Hollebeke, and many others, Romanists as well as Protestants, the present work would have lacked much of its value.

A man like Tyndale, who is now coming to be recognised as "the true hero of the English Reformation," needs no artifice on

the part of his biographer to raise him in public esteem. No attempt, therefore, has been made in these pages to conceal his faults, to disguise his opinions, or to exaggerate his virtues. Tyndale himself was at all times conspicuous for his fearless honesty; and his biographer is bound, were it only out of reverence to his memory, to be, above everything, honest and truthful. In this attempt to ascertain the truth it has been found impossible to avoid a certain controversial tone throughout the work; for many of the facts of Tyndale's life have been disputed or distorted, through carelessness, through prejudice, and through the malice of that school of writers in whose eyes the Reformation was a mistake, if not a crime, and who conceive it to be their mission to revive all the old calumnies that have ever been circulated against the Reformers, supplementing them by new accusations of their own invention.

Considerable extracts have been given from each of Tyndale's works, so as to afford the reader the opportunity of judging for himself as to their character and merits. These extracts have been in general taken from the Parker Society Edition of the Reformer's writings, and are presented in modernised spelling, there being no object to be gained by retaining the obsolete and capricious orthography of the originals. For what is enclosed within square brackets, it will be understood that the biographer is in all cases responsible: the words thus inserted are either brief explanations of antiquated terms, or, in the case of extracts from manuscripts, conjectural readings where the original document is defective or undecipherable.

The woodcut of the old castle of Vilvorde, the scene of Tyndale's imprisonment and martyrdom, has been taken from one of the interesting memoirs published by M. Galesloot, which was in its turn a reproduction of a water-colour in the Royal Library at Brussels. It is new to the English reader, and has a special value as exhibiting the castle pretty much as it must have appeared in Tyndale's time.

In a word, every effort has been used to make the present work a worthy biography of one of the greatest of Englishmen, and as such, it is hoped, the reading public will be pleased to receive it.

ST. LUKE'S, CHELSEA:
November, 1871.

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WILLIAM TYNDALE.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE.

A.D. 1484—1521.

"THE history of Tyndale," remarks a great English writer, "has almost been lost in his work." His work remains, and is likely long to remain, loved and reverenced by all English-speaking people throughout the world, as their noblest inheritance; but the man, to whose patient labour and heroic self-sacrifice we are mainly indebted for the English Bible, has been allowed to almost drop out of memory. Tyndale, indeed, with his characteristic unselfishness and noble disregard of fame, would have been well content that he himself should be forgotten, if only "the Word of God might be permitted to go abroad in the English tongue;" but it would ill become his countrymen, who have benefited so largely by his labours, patiently to allow oblivion to settle down upon a life so worthy to be held in perpetual admiration. Much that we should gladly have known of the details of his personal history is now, in all probability, lost beyond recovery; yet, on the other hand, modern research, prosecuted with greater zeal and more copious facilities than at any previous period, has brought to light valuable materials for the elucidation of parts of his career,

which have hitherto been involved in obscurity. At all events, it is high time that something should be attempted which, if not worthy of Tyndale's merit, may be accepted as an instalment of England's gratitude.

The whole story of the birth and early life of Tyndale is involved in uncertainty, which the energy of many painstaking inquirers has not yet succeeded in dissipating. The illustrious translator himself, probably from motives of caution, seldom makes any allusion to his early years; and Foxe, his first biographer, who was intimately acquainted with several of Tyndale's associates, has unfortunately contented himself with the vague and unsatisfactory declaration, "Touching the birth and parentage of this blessed martyr of Christ, *he was born about the borders of Wales.*" Tradition has, of course, largely supplemented this scanty information; and for nearly three centuries it has been generally believed, that Tyndale was born in Gloucestershire, which, as Monmouth was then reckoned to belong to Wales, is in perfect accordance with the statement of Foxe. A later tradition has even ventured to indicate the village and the very house in which the martyr first saw the light; and this tradition likewise has passed into general currency, and has been embodied not only in books but in materials much more enduring.

The traveller, who speeds along the railway between Bristol and Gloucester, cannot fail to observe a noble monument conspicuously perched on the bold extremity of one of the most beautiful of the Cotswolds. This is the column erected to the honour of Tyndale on Nibley Knoll; the little village of North Nibley, which straggles in picturesque confusion at the foot of the hill, claims to be the unquestionable birth-place of the great translator; and the villagers assure the inquiring traveller that the dilapidated manor-house of Hunt's Court was the residence of Tyndale's parents, and sheltered the birth and boyhood of the future martyr. Sweeter birth-place there is none in England. "Nybley, anciently written Nubbelei," says its enthusiastic historian,

"Nubbeleigh, and Nubeleg and Nibeleigh, *quasi*, (if descant upon the name may be allowed), cloudwater, or obscure place, an etymology agreeable to the springs and water here, and their covert situation, is not more pleasantly seated on a comely hill than healthful; than which none in the county, or scarce in the kingdom, standeth in a sweeter air[1]." Unfortunately for the pleasing tradition, which thus links the memory of the Reformer with one of the loveliest spots in England, it cannot be traced farther back than the commencement of last century, and when closely examined, it is found to rest upon an insufficient foundation[2]. Beyond all question there were Tyndales residing at Hunt's Court towards the end of the reign of Henry VIII., but it was not till long after the Reformer's birth that Hunt's Court came into their possession; and though there is every reason to believe that these Tyndales of North Nibley were kinsmen of the Reformer, there is not the slightest evidence that he was a son of that house. It is, certainly, not a little curious that Thomas Tyndale and Alice Hunt, the possessors of Hunt's Court in the reign of Henry, had a son named *William*; and the mention of this coincidence in the county histories has induced some biographers to assert as an indubitable truth, established by documentary evidence, that this William was no other than the translator[3]; but, in fact, it can be demonstrated on the unquestionable authority of a legal deed, that the William Tyndale who was born at Hunt's Court, was

[1] Smythe's *MS. History of the Hundred of Berkeley*. I beg to acknowledge my obligations to J. H. Cook, Esq., of Berkeley Castle, for the courtesy with which he allowed me to consult Mr. Smythe's invaluable collections.

[2] The tradition is no older, I think, than Atkins in his *History of Gloucestershire*. In recent times it has been circulated mainly on the authority of Oade Roberts, who was a collateral descendant of the Tyndales of Hunt's Court; but any one who examines the letters of Oade Roberts, which are preserved in the British Museum, (Additional MSS. 9,458), will perceive at a glance that what he records is mere unauthenticated gossip, baseless as the prophecies of Zadkiel.

[3] It is mentioned by Rudder, *Gloucestershire*, p. 696; and Anderson, in his *Annals of the English Bible*, at once assumes that this William Tyndale was the martyr.

alive in 1542, and could not, therefore, have been the martyr who perished at Vilvorde in 1536[1].

Years, however, before the intermarriage with the heiress of the Hunts brought Hunt's Court into the Tyndale family, there had been Tyndales established as farmers at Melksham Court, in the neighbouring parish of Stinchcombe; and as far back as the reign of Richard III., Tyndales had possessed some parts of the Manor of Hurst in the adjoining parish of Slymbridge[2]. Indeed, so far as our present knowledge extends, it seems by no means improbable that it was not amid the breezy and beautiful Cotswolds, but in this parish of low-lying meadow land amongst fields of sedgy swamps reclaimed from the Severn, that the translator first saw the light[3].

The chief difficulty in ascertaining the parentage of Tyndale has arisen from the absence of any authoritative statement on the point by any of his contemporaries. Hitherto, nothing has been discovered concerning the family to which the Reformer belonged, beyond the fact that he had a brother called John, who was subsequently punished for aiding in the circulation of the New Testament. Quite unexpectedly, however, the present biographer has succeeded in unearthing a document which seems to bring the solution of the long-agitated question within our grasp. In the State Paper Office there is preserved a letter from Stokesley, Bishop of London, soliciting the grant of a farm in Gloucestershire for one of his servants. Another suppliant, however, was already in the field, and concerning him Stokesley notes, "*He that sueth unto you hath a kinsman called Edward Tyndale, brother to Tyndale the arch-heretic, and under-receiver of the lordship of Berkeley,*

[1] I have not seen the deed, but the original or a copy is still in existence, and I know that it conclusively shows that the *William* Tyndale, the son of Alice Hunt of North Nibley, was not the martyr.

[2] Smythe's *MS. History of the Hundred of Berkeley.*

[3] Certain lands in this parish, called the River-lands, came into the possession of one Richard Tyndale; they had been reclaimed from the river, and formed part of the Manor of Hurst.

which may and daily doth promote his kinsfolks there by [to] the King's farms[1]."

Now Stokesley, it must be remembered, was not only from his official position likely to be well informed on this point, but he had actually been rector of Slymbridge in 1509, and, therefore, was almost certainly personally acquainted with the Tyndales of Gloucestershire; his information may accordingly be received as of the very highest value. Moreover, Edward Tyndale, the "receiver[2] of the lordship of Berkeley," is a person perfectly well known to us, so that if "the arch-heretic" was indeed his brother, the whole family history down to the present day can be traced with perfect certainty[3]. A little explanation must, however, be premised, in order that the reader may sufficiently understand the circumstances of the case. William, Marquis of Berkeley, who had died in 1492, from some pique against his brother, bequeathed his estates to Henry VII.[4] and his heirs male; and they remained in the royal family till the accession of Mary. A local receiver of the rents and other payments due to the Crown from the Berkeley lands was, of course, appointed; and in 1519 Edward Tyndale was nominated to this office by letters patent[5]. This receiver was a man of energy, and rose high in the royal favour; in 1529 he received a grant of the lease of the manor of Hurst, in Slymbridge[6], the very ground on which we have supposed that he and his more illustrious brother were born; and at subsequent periods he held, by grant from the Abbot of Tewkesbury, the Manor of the Pull, or Pull Court, in the parish of Bushley in Worcester, and that of Burnet juxta

[1] State Paper Office. *Chapter House Papers*, Second Series, Vol. 23.

[2] *Receiver* and *under-receiver* I take to mean the same thing. Edward Tyndale was the *local* receiver of the rents, the receiver-in-chief being of course the great minister of the Crown, to whom all local rents were transmitted.

[3] It has been traced by B. W. Greenfield in his *Pedigree of the Tyndale Family*, which begins from this very Edward Tyndale.

[4] See Nicolas's *Historical Peerage of England*, edited by Courthope.

[5] Patent Rolls, 11 Henry VIII. Part 2. Membranes 19, 20.

[6] Patent Rolls, 21 Henry VIII. Part 1. Membrane 18.

Keynsham, in the county of Somerset[1]. His will, which was proved in London in 1546[2], shows him to have been a man of substance; and, what is more important as confirming Stokesley's account of him, he possessed some of those books whose circulation had been prohibited on account of their supposed heretical teaching[3]. Everything that appears in his will is, in fact, in perfect accordance with what Stokesley asserts in his letter; the names and alliances of his numerous children are all known; and if this evidence be accepted, then a very considerable amount of obscurity will have been removed from the family history of the illustrious martyr.

The only objection to the genealogy thus supplied by Stokesley, arises from the pedigrees which the heraldic historians have compiled. According to these authorities, Edward Tyndale, of Pull Court, was the fourth son of Sir William Tyndale, of Hockwold, in Norfolk, and his elder brother *William* survived till 1558, and could not, therefore, have been the martyr[4]. Whether these assertions are made on any sufficient evidence, or are merely the customary romancing of imaginative family genealogists, we have no sufficient opportunity for deciding. One thing, however, is certain; Stokesley, and Cromwell to whom his letter was addressed, could scarcely have been mistaken in their reference to a man who was probably personally known to the one, as he was officially connected with the other of them; and the assertion on such authority that William Tyndale the "arch-heretic" was the brother of the Receiver of the Crown-rents on the Berkeley estates, must be accepted as conclusively establishing this extremely interesting point in the great Reformer's life. Further research may perhaps

[1] Greenfield, *Pedigree of the Family of Tyndale*, to which excellent compilation I am indebted for several useful hints.

[2] *Alen.* 21; dated August 17, proved October 1, 1546.

[3] He had e.g., *Pellicanus on the Old Testament*, which was forbidden by royal proclamation in July 1546. This book, *along with his best bow and the bow-case*, he bequeathed to Robert Green, parish priest of Tewkesbury, near which town Pull Court is situated.

[4] See especially Burke's *History of the Commoners*, Vol. IV. p. 546. Rudder's *Gloucestershire*, p. 756.

clear up what still remains obscure in the history of his early years; the evidence which has here, for the first time, been adduced, shows that we need not despair of recovering, by dint of persevering labour, much that now seems lost[1].

The other family legend, set afloat in the reign of Charles II., that the Tyndales "came out of the North in the times of the wars between the houses of York and Lancaster[2]," and that for a time they sought to elude observation by changing their name to Hutchins, is probably not without foundation, though it cannot be said to be established by any documentary evidence; and on the whole it seems to supply a far more probable theory of the origin of the Tyndales of Slymbridge, than the heraldic boast that they were related to wealthy aristocratic houses whose members were familiar in royal palaces, and were even offered royal honours[3]. But enough of a matter which is still confessedly involved in considerable obscurity, and where modest conjecture is more appropriate than confident assertion. No reason has as yet been given for discrediting Foxe's statement that Tyndale was born "on the borders of Wales;" and whatever may have been the exact locality of his birth, whether amongst the breezy beauties of the Cotswolds, or, as seems more probable, "by the rushy-fringed bank," within which "Sabrina," still fair and unpolluted, rolled "her glassy, cool, translucent wave[4]" to the Bristol Channel, it, at all events, lies within the ken of the traveller

[1] I leave to the genealogists the further prosecution of the subject in the light of the new evidence now brought to bear upon it. The assertion of Stokesley must, however, under the circumstances, be assumed as conclusive, unless the strongest documentary evidence can be alleged against it.

[2] See the whole legend set forth with delightful simplicity in a letter from Thomas Tyndale, of Kingston St. Michael, to Tyndale of Stinchcombe, printed entire in Rudder's *History of Gloucestershire.*

[3] According to the genealogists, Sir William Tyndale, of Hockwold, was created a Knight of the Bath at the marriage of Prince Arthur; and his eldest son received the same honour at the coronation of Anne Boleyn, and declined the Crown of Bohemia, to which he had some hereditary claims through his great-grandmother.

[4] Milton's *Comus.*

who mounts the bold vantage-ground of "Tyndale's monument."

The *date* of the Reformer's birth is involved in equal uncertainty, and can only be approximated to by inference. Some biographers have assigned it to about the year 1470; making Tyndale die a martyr at nearly seventy years of age. All that we know of him, however, seems to indicate that he perished while still in middle life, and that he must, by consequence, have been born between 1480 and 1490. Thus, in defending his translation of the New Testament against Sir Thomas More's attack, he incidentally remarks, "These things to be even so, M. More knoweth well enough, for he understandeth the Greek, *and he knew them long ere I*[1]." As Tyndale's early education was not neglected, and he was sent to Oxford at a very early age ("from a child," according to Foxe), it seems a legitimate inference from these words that he was somewhat younger than Sir Thomas More. Sir Thomas, it is generally agreed, was born in 1480, and Tyndale's birth may, therefore, with some probability be assigned to a few years later, perhaps about 1484 or 1486. And with this conjectural date every allusion to Tyndale's age sufficiently corresponds. Sir Thomas More seems to rank him, in point of age, with Luther, who was born in 1483; and Foxe seems to speak of his martyrdom as occurring while he was in middle life, which would certainly not allow the date of his birth to be carried farther back than 1480. On the whole, therefore, it may be assumed as highly probable that Tyndale was born somewhere about the year 1484: any more precise determination of the date must be the result of further investigation.

In the uncertainty which rests upon the place of Tyndale's birth and the social position of his parents, any picture of his early life must be, of course, wholly drawn from imagination. Slymbridge, if we assume this to have been his birthplace, was then, as now, wholly engrossed in the production of cheese and butter; a quiet agricultural parish, where life would flow

[1] Tyndale's *Answer to More*. Tyndale's *Works*, Vol. III. p. 23.

on calmly as the great river that formed its boundary. The dairymaid was the true annalist of Slymbridge; and the only occurrence, beyond drought, which would distress the peaceful population, would be occasional predatory incursions by their lawless neighbours from the Forest of Dean, which waved in hills of verdure towards the West, as a picturesque counterbalance to the Cotswolds in the East. Such a place one naturally associates with stagnant thought and immemorial traditions. Like the rest of the Manor of Berkeley, it had passed into the hands of the Crown; and this led to the institution of one of the most charming customs that still subsist in England. Annually, on the first day of May, the choristers of Magdalen College, Oxford, ascend the tower of that princely establishment, and at five in the morning join in singing a hymn, which floats down in the sweet calm like the music of the spheres. Originally, it is said, the hymn was a requiem for the repose of the soul of Henry VII.; and to the present day, the money which rewards the labours of the choristers, is paid from the Rectory of Slymbridge. The patronage of the rectory is likewise vested in Magdalen College; and this connection was, doubtless, not without its influence when Tyndale was ready to be sent to the University.

The education of the young Tyndale was, we know, not neglected. He had a peculiar aptitude for the acquisition of languages; and no doubt exhibited in his childhood that sharpness of comprehension for which he was afterwards distinguished. Of the nature of his early studies he has not left any record; the experience of later life probably led him to look upon them with contempt as a grievous waste of time. One allusion only has been preserved in his works to what occupied the first energies of his mind, but it is a highly curious one, well deserving a place in this biography. In the course of his *Obedience of a Christian Man*, while advocating the propriety of translating Holy Scripture into the English language, he asserts, "Except my memory fail me, and that I

have forgotten what I read when I was a child, thou shalt find in the English chronicle, how that King Athelstane caused the Holy Scripture to be translated into the tongue that then was in England, and how the prelates exhorted him thereto[1]." "The child is father of the man;" surely, in this picture of the boy Tyndale studying the chronicles, and carefully noting in the past history of England the manner in which the free circulation of the vernacular Bible had at different times been dealt with, we may see a significant and almost prophetical forecast of the future life of the man.

All the historical interest of the Vale of Berkeley centred in the grim old Castle of Berkeley, and in the traditions of the noble family which for ages had been lords of almost all that could be seen from its towers. With these local traditions, doubtless, Tyndale was imbued almost from infancy; but they do not concern us here, and they seem not to have exercised any perceptible influence over his character and opinions.

There is one tradition, however, of which Tyndale could not have been ignorant, which is too interesting and appropriate to be omitted. About a century before the birth of Tyndale, John de Trevisa had been vicar of Berkeley and chaplain to Thomas, fifth Baron Berkeley. This baron is said to have been a pupil of Wickliffe, and to have imbibed the opinions of that Reformer; and his chaplain, a man of accomplished literary tastes, known to scholars as the author of a translation of Higden's *Polychronicon*, which was one of the earliest books printed by Caxton, is also said to have been a zealous propagator of the doctrines of Wickliffe. According to Caxton, Trevisa, like his illustrious contemporary, undertook to translate the Holy Scriptures from the Vulgate into the English tongue, for the instruction of his countrymen[2]; and

[1] Tyndale's *Works*, Vol. I. p. 149. Tyndale's memory may have failed him, or the chronicle may have been mistaken in assigning to Athelstane what should have been assigned to Alfred. But on this subject English history is full of confusion.

[2] For the best account of Trevisa see Babington's edition of the *Polychronicon*. Trevisa's scholarship was not of the highest order, and Babington has given some curious specimens of his ignorance; thus he translates the words, "*Eam* [*Mysiam*]

it has even been surmised that his work may still be in existence amongst the ill-digested treasures of the Vatican. One abiding memorial of Trevisa has not wholly perished, even in our day[1], and in Tyndale's time it must have been fresh and legible, and not improbably was often seen by him, not without results. Round the walls and roof of the interesting private chapel in the castle, he caused to be inscribed passages from the Apocalypse in Latin and Norman-French, for the edification of such as were able to read. It may surely be surmised that the memory of the courageous vicar had not perished in Tyndale's day; for the appearance of such a man was a sign of the times, an indication of an approaching reawakening of the human intellect from the torpor of centuries. For, as Fuller quaintly puts it, "Midnight being now past, some early risers were beginning to strike fire and enlighten themselves from the Scriptures[2]." And if everything else that Trevisa had ever uttered had been forgotten, surely in the county of Gloucester, swarming with monks, and thick-studded with wealthy religious establishments, men would not easily forget the keen sarcasm of his remark, "Christ sent apostles and priests into the world, but never any monks or begging friars."

Whether the opinions of the followers of Wickliffe had made any impression upon the Tyndales of Gloucestershire, so as to exercise some influence upon the religious education of the future Reformer, is a question that must be left entirely to conjecture. Lollardry had certainly met with some favour in various parts of the county. Wickliffe himself is said to have held a living in the neighbourhood of Bristol[3], and to have frequently preached in that enterprising metropolis of the West

veteres Cereris horreum nuncupaverunt," "The old Cereris clepit hit a berne"! So low had scholarship fallen in those days.

[1] As this matter has been a good deal disputed, I may at once say that I have *seen* what I here describe. Many persons seem to have confused the parish church of Berkeley with the private chapel in the castle.

[2] Fuller's *Church History*.

[3] That of Westbury-on-Trim, north-west of Bristol.

of England; and there is no doubt that John Purvey, the distinguished reviser of Wickliffe's translation, preached in that city, denouncing, with all his powerful eloquence, the abounding corruptions of religion, and especially the scandalous lives of the mendicant friars[1]. But this premature reformation soon passed away; leaving behind, however, as the germinating seeds of future changes, its vernacular version of the Vulgate, and a re-awakened spirit of free inquiry, which were sure, under more favourable circumstances, to produce momentous results.

At the era of Tyndale's birth the Church had apparently recovered from the wounds which Wickliffe and the Lollards had inflicted. The persecuting laws which the usurping family of Lancaster had enacted in order to propitiate the favour of the clergy, seemed to have effectually accomplished their purpose. The voice of heretical teaching was silenced. The doctrines of the Gospellers still continued, indeed, to be propagated, mainly through the clandestine circulation of Wickliffe's writings, and especially his translation of Scripture; yet the clergy considered all danger as over; they resumed their wonted arrogance; they returned to their evil ways; and the scandals which had been so severely denounced burst forth afresh with new luxuriance. The ignorance of the clergy, and particularly of the religious orders, seemed to become more profound than ever; or perhaps the faint streaks of the dawning of learning made the darkness more conspicuous by contrast. They were ignorant in many cases even of that Latin language which alone was employed in the services of the Church; and, so late even as 1530, Tyndale ventured to assert that there were twenty thousand priests in England who could not have translated into plain English the clause in the Lord's Prayer, "Fiat voluntas tua sicut in cœlo et in terrâ[2]." We are ready to admit, indeed, that the vehemence of argument here betrayed Tyndale into

[1] Sayers' *Memoirs of Bristol.* Vol. II. p. 168.

[2] Tyndale's *Answer to Sir Thomas More*, p. 75, and note.

exaggeration; but we know that in the reign of Edward VI., Bishop Hooper found scores of clergy in this very county of Gloucester unable to tell who was the author of the Lord's Prayer, or where it was to be read. The modern reader, in short, can hardly imagine the gross ignorance that prevailed amongst those who were supposed to be the instructors of the people, and can, therefore, scarcely appreciate the urgent necessity that existed for a Reformation.

The Bible, it need hardly be added, was practically unknown, either to clergy or to people. The Convocation of the province of Canterbury had expressly forbidden any man to translate any part of Scripture into the English tongue, or to read such translation without the authority of the bishop, an authority not very likely to be granted[1]. The study of Holy Scripture did not even form a part of the preparatory education of those who were destined to be the religious teachers of the people; theological summaries, compiled by scholastic doctors, took the place of the Word of God; and St. Paul was cast into the shade by the "doctor sanctus," the "angel of the schools," "divus Thomas de Aquino." As an inevitable result, religion had degenerated into an unprofitable round of superstitious customs and ceremonial observances. The service of the Church was so intricate that the study of years was necessary to enable either priest or people to perform it aright. The use and moral teaching of these ceremonies, moreover, had become entirely obsolete; their original function in the Church was completely gone; they had altogether ceased to be in any sense aids to devotion, and were impediments to all true religion. The relics, the pilgrimages, the pictures and images, the commemorations of saints, all these had been entirely emptied of that meaning which had originally led to their institution, and which is still alleged in their defence; they had ceased to be "laymen's books," in which the unlearned might read their duty in plain symbols; they had been abused for purposes

[1] Wilkins' *Concilia*, Vol. III. p. 317.

of imposture and debauchery, and were, in fact, substitutes for all the real duties of religious life.

And to these evils of superstition were also beginning to be added those of hypocrisy. The human mind was awakening to freedom and action; the words of Wickliffe had not been water spilt on the ground; men were on all sides asking some proofs of the doctrines, some reason for the ceremonies, which were styled religion, and which were proclaimed to be of Divine obligation, necessary to be received by all under peril of eternal damnation. To such inquiries the clergy vouchsafed no answer; they replied by demanding implicit obedience, and by reiterating with more vehement assertion their claims to Divine reverence; and they put into operation the sanguinary power of persecution with which the laws had armed them. Fear of the penalties of the law deterred many, no doubt, from publicly avowing their dissent from the teaching of the Church; but such means could not arrest the progress of free inquiry. Men continued as before to join in public in the services of the Church; they offered candles, they went on pilgrimages, they kissed St. Thomas's shoe and knelt at the image of Our Lady of Walsingham, they fasted and paid all the dues of Mother Church; but all this was done no longer in a spirit of faith and reverence; smiles of incredulous derision might have been seen on the face of many a worshipper, and sharp expressions of shrewd scepticism might have been overheard at many a shrine[1]. For the life had departed from the old religion; the outward form still remained, and there was a certain mechanical semblance of activity and vitality; but the spirit that should have animated it with true life had disappeared. The dry bones were there, they waited for the breathing of the Spirit from on high that they might again live.

Nowhere did these religious abuses flourish in greater vigour than in that county of Gloucester, where Tyndale was born, and spent his early years. That county was the very strong-

[1] See *e.g.*, the famous account of the pilgrimage of Erasmus and Colet to Canterbury and Walsingham.

hold of the Church: it boasted of no fewer than six mitred abbeys: it possessed the most famous relic in the kingdom, the blood of Hailes, the sight of which was supposed to insure eternal salvation; and so predominant was the influence of the clergy throughout the county that "as sure as God is in Gloucester" had come to be a familiar proverb all over England. Nowhere, probably, was religion more entirely a thing of form and ceremony; and of these ceremonies, in almost all cases, unmeaning, and in not a few, grotesque and ridiculous, the young Tyndale, shrewd and thoughtful from his childhood, was no inattentive observer. When at a subsequent period he directed all the energy of his pen against the superstitious practices sanctioned by the Church, his recollection of what he had witnessed around him in his youth, furnished him with endless illustrations to point his arguments. The kissing of the thumb-nails previous to engaging in prayer, the flinging holy water at the devil, the offering of a big cheese every year to St. White,[1] the strange performances at Baptism, at Confirmation, and at Mass, all formed part of the "dumb ceremonies" which Tyndale had witnessed from his youth; and in which we can scarcely imagine one with so acute and logical a mind ever joining with any feelings of reverence.

Of the members of the household among whom Tyndale grew up to maturity we have almost nothing to record. His father and mother are personages unknown as yet to history; of his brother Edward we have already heard, and he had besides a brother John, who was subsequently established as a merchant in London, and who, in 1531, was

[1] Gloucester being an agricultural county, in which the interests of the dairies were supreme, it was deemed necessary to invoke the assistance of a special saint to protect the cream and the cheese against the accidents of the weather, and the depredation of the fairies and the Welshmen. The saint selected for this purpose was Saint White, a personage by no means familiar even to persons deeply read in hagiology. Tyndale (*Works*, Vol. II. p. 126) speaks of the saint as a female, assuming, no doubt, that she was a canonised dairymaid; but more learned doctors affirm that St. White, or St. Witta, was in reality a German bishop of the eighth century, one of the Saxon companions of the famous Winfrid, or Boniface, the "Apostle of Germany."

brought before Sir Thomas More, charged with receiving and distributing copies of the English New Testament, and was fined and subjected to an ignominious punishment for this heinous offence. Stokesley, too, then Bishop of London, formerly Rector of Slymbridge, summoned John Tyndale before him for sending money over the sea to his brother William, and for receiving and retaining letters from his brother, so that we may believe Tyndale was, from his earliest years, blessed with the sympathy of relatives like-minded with himself.

The statement of Foxe that "Tyndale was brought up from a child in the University of Oxford," if somewhat vague, seems, at all events, sufficient authority for believing that Tyndale was sent at an early age to the University, the natural result, we suppose, of the rapid progress in his studies, made by one who unquestionably exhibited unusual facility in the acquisition of languages. At Oxford he was, according to unvarying tradition, entered in Magdalen Hall, better known in those days as "Grammar Hall," from its having been originally designed by its munificent founder, William of Waynflete, to serve as a sort of preparatory school of grammatical drill for his larger and more magnificent foundation in the same University, Magdalen College. Magdalen Hall is a small building now included in Magdalen College; and it was in Tyndale's time of still more limited dimensions, consisting simply of the school and the refectory with the chambers over. From its connection, however, with the other magnificent foundation of Waynflete, its importance was much greater than its size would indicate; and many illustrious men were associated with it. Wolsey is said to have been master of the school; and Stokesley and Longland, subsequently bishops of London and Lincoln, were successive Principals of the Hall from 1502 to 1507, probably during the very time of Tyndale's residence. The memory of the great Reformer has not been forgotten at his *alma mater:* a portrait of him hangs in the hall of Hertford College, with a

laudatory inscription, freely recognising his great ability and the services which he rendered to the interests of true religion[1].

Of his University career there are no authentic records; the registers of the University of Oxford do not extend back so far as the period when Tyndale was in residence[2]; and we have no alternative, therefore, but to adopt the summary of this part of Tyndale's life which Foxe has given. "At Oxford," says Foxe, "he, by long continuance, grew and increased as well in the knowledge of tongues and other liberal arts, as specially in the knowledge of the Scriptures, whereunto his mind was singularly addicted, insomuch that he, lying there in Magdalen Hall, read privily to certain students and fellows of Magdalen College, some parcel of divinity, instructing them in the knowledge and truth of the Scriptures. Whose manners also and conversation, being correspondent to the same, were such, that all they that knew him, respected and esteemed him to be a man of most virtuous disposition,

[1] The inscription is as follows:

Gulielmus Tyndalus, Martyr,
Olim ex Aul: Magd:
Refert hæc tabella (quod solum potuit Ars) Gulielmi
Tindale effigiem, hujus olim Aulæ alumni simul et ornamenti;
Qui post felices purioris theologiæ primitias hic depositas,
Antverpiæ in Novo Testamento, necnon Pentateucho
In vernaculam transferendo operam navavit, Anglis suis eo
Usque salutiferam, ut inde non immerito Angliæ Apostolus
Audiret, Wilfordæ prope Bruxellas martyrio coronatus
An: 1536. Vir si vel adversario (procuratori nempe Imperatoris
Generali) credamus, perdoctus, pius et bonus.

Which may be Englished thus:

This canvas represents (which is all that Art can do)
The likeness of William Tyndale, formerly student and pride of this Hall;
Who after reaping here the happy first-fruits of a purer faith,
Devoted his energy at Antwerp to the translation
Of the New Testament and Pentateuch into the native language:
A work so beneficial to his English countrymen, that he is
Not undeservedly called the Apostle of England.
He received the crown of martyrdom at Vilvorde, near Brussels, 1536.
A man (if we may believe his opponent, the Procurator-General
Of the Emperor) very learned, pious, and good.

[2] See Editor's Preface.

and of life unspotted. Thus he, in the University of Oxford, increasing more and more in learning, and proceeding in degrees of the schools, spying his time, removed from thence to the University of Cambridge, where after he had likewise made his abode a certain space; being now further ripened in the knowledge of God's Word, leaving that University also, he resorted to one Master Walsh, a knight of Gloucestershire, and was there schoolmaster to his children, and in good favour with his master."

Such is the whole record of Tyndale's University life, and it is not only extremely meagre, but, what is worse, extremely vague, not affording any means of fixing the date to which the events ought to be assigned. There can be no doubt, however, of the truth of Foxe's assertion, that Tyndale "proceeded in degrees of the schools;" for this can be substantiated by the admission of Tyndale's bitter antagonist, Sir Thomas More. "In Universities," Tyndale had said, by way of illustrating the various meanings of the word *grace*, "many ungracious graces there be gotten[1];" on which Sir Thomas More retorts, "He should have made it more plain and better perceived if he had said, as for example, 'When his own *grace* was there granted to be made Master of Arts[2].'" Sir Thomas More was not likely to use words thoughtlessly, and his retort places beyond dispute the fact that Tyndale had received the degree of Master of Arts at the University.

It is necessary, however, for the purposes of this biography to make some attempt to assign a proximate date for the period of Tyndale's residence at Oxford; and the only clue that we possess to guide us, is his own incidental intimation already noticed that Sir Thomas More knew Greek long before he himself did. Now, we know that Sir Thomas More's residence at Oxford lasted only from the middle of 1497 to the end of 1498, and making all allowance for Tyndale's being sent very early to the University, as Foxe states that he was

[1] *Answer to Sir Thomas More*, p. 22.
[2] More's *Confutation of Tyndale.*

"brought up there from a child," there does not seem to be any sufficient reason for supposing that he would enter Oxford much earlier than the year 1504. On this hypothesis, it would, according to the practice then observed, be 1508 before he would graduate as Bachelor of Arts, and 1511 before he received his degree as Master[1].

Of the character of the studies in which these years were in all probability spent, Tyndale has left no very flattering account. It was an age of change, when a few daring voices were beginning to protest against the ignorance and barbarism that had so long prevailed. A few bold English scholars had ventured to Italy to drink of the pure fountains of revived taste and learning. Greek had been taught within the walls of Oxford before the conclusion of the fifteenth century; and the pure Latinity of the great classical writers of Rome had been held up as a model for imitation instead of the barbarous and corrupt productions of the mediæval schoolmen. Such daring innovations were not, of course, approved by the great authorities of the University, but were loudly condemned as immoral and heretical. It was of Oxford doubtless, and the teaching which it afforded in his early years, that Tyndale subsequently asked in contemptuous scorn, "Remember ye not how within this thirty years[2] and far less, and yet dureth to this day, the old barking curs, Duns' Disciples, [followers of Duns Scotus] and like draff called Scotists, the children of darkness, raged in every pulpit against Greek, Latin, and Hebrew; and what sorrow the schoolmasters, that taught the true Latin tongue, had with them; some beating the pulpit with their fists for madness, and roaring out with open and foaming mouth, that if there were but one Terence or Virgil in the world, and that same in their sleeves, and a fire before them, they would burn them therein, though it should cost them

[1] See Editor's Preface. Tyndale was admitted to the Degree of B.A. in 1512, and licensed for M.A. in 1515. It is interesting to note how near to the truth the author's hypothesis was.

[2] This was written in 1530.

their lives; affirming that all good learning decayed and was utterly lost, since men gave them unto the Latin tongue[1]."

With such apostles of ignorance controlling the studies of the University, or even exercising any considerable influence upon them, the course of study would have very little of the liberal and humanising tendency usually ascribed to a University training. Holy Scripture fared as badly at their hands as Virgil and Terence. How men were trained for the Church in the Oxford of the commencement of the sixteenth century Tyndale has recorded in a few brief indignant sentences. "In the Universities they have ordained that no man shall look at the Scripture until he be noselled [nursed or trained] in heathen learning eight or nine years, and armed with false principles, with which he is clean shut out of the understanding of the Scripture. And at his first coming unto University, he is sworn that he shall not defame the University, whatsoever he seeth. And when he taketh first degree, he is sworn that he shall hold none opinions condemned by the Church; but what such opinions be, that he shall not know. And then, when they be admitted to study divinity, because the Scripture is locked up with such false expositions, *and with false principles of natural philosophy*, that they cannot enter in, they go about the outside, and dispute all their lives about words and vain opinions, pertaining as much unto the healing of a man's heel, as health of his soul: provided yet alway, lest God give His singular grace unto any person, that none may preach except he be admitted of the bishops[2]."

Tyndale writes in a vein of vehement indignation; but Sir Thomas More in his younger days would scarcely have ventured to deny the charge, and Erasmus abundantly confirms it. In such hands theology was no longer a divine and ennobling study, but a wretched battle-field of the most useless and most contemptible wrangling. "Theology," in the words of Erasmus, "once venerable and full of majesty, had become

[1] *Answer to Sir Thomas More: Works*, Vol. III. p. 75.

[2] *Practice of Prelates: Works*, Vol. II. p. 291.

almost dumb, poor, and in rags." The true purpose of Holy Scripture had been almost entirely lost sight of; and the Sacred Books had been persistently employed for purposes for which they were not designed. The Bible makes known to men the way of salvation, it reveals the character and will of God, the duty and destiny of man; but the schoolmen accepted it as a complete revelation of the whole range of possible human knowledge. They overlooked in it "the Way, the Truth, the Life;" their search was directed rather to discovering expressions which might be adduced to decide perplexing questions in science and philosophy. It was an inevitable result of this total misapprehension that the Bible itself soon ceased to be the supreme subject of study; it was of less importance than the theories of the great speculative divines of the schools, Duns Scotus and Thomas Aquinas. Theology ceased to be practical; and theologians spent their energies in endless discussions, sometimes marvellously subtle, often extremely frivolous, occasionally grossly indecent and blasphemous, "such," says Erasmus, "as pious ears can hardly bear to hear," but in scarcely a single instance of any avail for the guidance of life. The whole system, in fact, with all its merits and demerits, has been admirably described by Lord Bacon. "The schoolmen," says the great critic, "having subtle and strong capacities, abundance of leisure, and but small variety of reading, their minds being shut up in a few authors as their bodies were in the cells of their monasteries; they, with infinite agitation of wit, spun out of a small quantity of matter, those laborious webs of learning which are extant in their books. For the human mind, if it acts upon matter and contemplates the nature of things and the works of God, operates according to the stuff and is limited thereby; but if it works upon itself as the spider does, then it has no end, but produces cobwebs of learning, admirable indeed for the fineness of the thread, but of no substance or profit[1]."

[1] Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*. Book I.

In this unprofitable "scholastic treadmill[1]," Tyndale, like the other students, his contemporaries, was compelled to employ the strength of his clear intellect, grinding at the subtle syllogisms and cunningly contrived dilemmas and logical snares by which the Scotists and the Thomists defended their own opinions, or attacked those of their antagonists.

There were signs, however, that this "reign of Chaos and old Night" was verging to its close. Just before Tyndale had entered the University, that great movement for the revival of learning, which had awakened Italy to intellectual life, had begun to make itself felt in Oxford. Grocyn, Linacre, and William Latimer had returned from Italy with sufficient knowledge of the Greek tongue to be able to instruct their fellow-countrymen, and even to attract the famous Erasmus as to a pure fountain of classical learning. A better voice also than that of pagan Greece or Rome was beginning to be heard in the University. Grocyn and Linacre seemed, with the love of classical literature, to have imbibed the spirit of the old heathen philosophy, and had no spiritual wants beyond what Cicero and Plato could abundantly supply; but a new scholar had appeared on the scene, whose voice invited men not to the Castalian spring, but to the pure river of the Water of Life which had been so long neglected.

In 1496, John Colet commenced to lecture on the Epistles of St. Paul; not after the traditional scholastic method, which consisted mainly in repeating the conjectural comments of former interpreters, but using St. Paul's own words as his text; and rejecting all spiritualising and allegorising systems of interpretation he endeavoured to ascertain the plain meaning of the Apostle's language. Under his exposition the words of the Epistles again became full of life, were again felt to be at once the word of God, and the word of a living man: oracles of Divine wisdom, yet instinct with all the warmth of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. Colet had travelled into Italy, like Grocyn and Linacre, and like them had studied

[1] So Seebohm happily styles it: *Oxford Reformers of* 1498.

Greek there; but his was no cold pagan spirit, he devoted himself above all to the study of Holy Scripture; his chief aim in all his studies was to qualify himself for the glorious work of proclaiming the Gospel, and he returned to his native land animated with all the enthusiasm of a young evangelist. It has been conjectured [1] that the impassioned eloquence of the famous Dominican preacher, Jerome Savonarola, had touched the heart of Colet when at Florence, and that he determined to imitate in his own country the example of that bold Reformer, whom Florence still reverences as an apostolical man, though he perished as a heretic at the stake. However this may be, it is certain that from the return of Colet to Oxford we may date the commencement of the movement in the English Universities towards the reformation of religion. Colet himself was, not without very good reason, suspected of teaching what was esteemed heresy, and even his elevation to the high position of Dean of St. Paul's did not entirely save him from the customary risk to which all suspected heretics were then exposed.

The lectures of Colet on St. Paul excited a great sensation in the University. The lecturer had, according to Erasmus, "a happy art of expressing with ease what others could hardly express with the greatest labour;" to listen to him was like listening to Plato; and his lectures were thronged by all classes in the University, from heads of houses down to the freshest undergraduate. His words were eagerly canvassed, and opinions were widely divided upon them; the old shaking their heads at the youthful lecturer who spoke disrespectfully of Scotus and Thomas Aquinas, whilst the younger members were inclined to sympathise with the boldness and novelty of the interpretations advanced. Among the earliest of Colet's auditors were two whose fame was destined to eclipse that of their master: Thomas More, and Erasmus of Rotterdam. Congenial tastes, similar temperaments, and enthusiastic love

[1] Seebohm, *Oxford Reformers of* 1498; to which the reader is referred for a more detailed account of Colet.

of learning speedily drew the master and his illustrious scholars closely together in an intimate friendship which death alone dissolved. The letters of Erasmus show to what a large extent his religious opinions were influenced by his intercourse with Colet; and as Erasmus became subsequently the great literary autocrat of Europe, whose writings moulded the thought and belief of half Christendom, the influence of Colet was thus propagated on a most extensive scale, and, indirectly, contributed very largely to that movement in favour of a reformation of religion in life and doctrine which is the great starting-point of modern history.

Neither Colet nor Erasmus ever very heartily sympathised with the popular desire for a reformation, and both were constitutionally weak, and unequal to the labours which the reformation of a nation required. When the movement had spread beyond the Universities and the learned to the common people, a stronger mind and a more robust frame were demanded, and Colet and Erasmus gave place to the more masculine energy of Luther. But it would be ungrateful to overlook or to undervalue the essential service which they rendered to the cause of religion, especially in England; and if the proverb, "Erasmus laid the egg and Luther hatched it," may be accepted as no inappropriate description of the history of the Reformation on the Continent of Europe, it may with even more truth be asserted that Colet and Erasmus gave the first impulses in England to that mighty movement which Tyndale and Latimer and Cranmer carried forward to its accomplishment.

If, as we have supposed, Tyndale entered the University of Oxford somewhere about the year 1507[1], as Colet continued to lecture till 1505, when he was made Dean of St. Paul's, it is not improbable that Tyndale's early days there were spent under the influence of that awakened spirit which Colet's lectures had excited. If he had come to Oxford, predisposed from the teaching of his parents, or from his own reflection, to

[1] See Editor's Preface. He probably entered Oxford in 1508.

receive with suspicion the traditional theology of the schools, we may imagine how cordially he would welcome the new system of exposition which Colet had inaugurated.

Tyndale himself is silent on this interesting period of his spiritual life. There can be little doubt that it was during his stay at the University that he abandoned the ancient orthodoxy of the Church, and began to adopt those opinions of which he was through life so able and so persevering an advocate; but we cannot in his case trace the progress of his conversion. The lectures of Colet may have been instrumental in pouring true light into his awakened soul; or he may have found it in the careful perusal of those living words of St. Paul, which Colet had so industriously disinterred from beneath the rubbish of five centuries of scholastic commentators. One thing is certain, the seed, however or whenever sown, took deep root in his mind. More than most of the early English Reformers, Tyndale seems to have subjected all his religious beliefs to a searching examination, and to have applied to them with rigorous logic the standard of judgment which he found in Holy Scripture. His progress was more rapid and definite than that of his great contemporaries, Latimer and Cranmer; and he never exhibited the same reluctance to abandon opinions or practices which had nothing to plead in their favour but custom and the practice of ages. The great English Reformers were as cautious and conservative as was compatible with a real desire for a reformation; in Tyndale, however, almost from the outset of his career as a public teacher, there is to be noted a clearness, a boldness, and withal a freedom from the trammels of ecclesiastical tradition, which produce in his reader's mind a profound admiration of the vigour and originality of his intellect.

What reason induced Tyndale to leave Oxford for Cambridge must be left entirely to conjecture. Foxe's words are almost whimsically vague, and suggest nothing; "spying his time," says the Martyrologist, "he removed from thence to the University of Cambridge." It has been thought that the

presence of Erasmus at Cambridge was the great inducement that attracted Tyndale to the sister University; and there is nothing in this theory inconsistent with what we know of Tyndale, but, on the contrary, much to lend it weight and probability. There is no doubt that until he left England, and became acquainted with Luther, Tyndale looked up to Erasmus as his religious guide. The learned Dutchman was at Cambridge from about 1510 to 1514; and on this hypothesis it is assumed that Tyndale left Oxford somewhere between these years to prosecute his studies in Greek and in theology under the most illustrious scholar of the day[1]. But this may not have been the sole reason for his change of residence.

It has also been conjectured that his removal from Oxford may have been a necessary piece of prudence on his part, in order to escape the suspicion of the authorities of the University. The heads of houses may have learned, not at all to their gratification, that Tyndale was "privily reading to certain students and fellows in Magdalen College some parcel of divinity, instructing them in the knowledge and truth of the Scriptures." The lectures of Colet had been a grievous offence to the champions of the traditional scholastic orthodoxy; suspicions were loudly expressed of the dangerous tendency of the "new learning;" and Tyndale may have found that he could no longer carry on in safety his privy lectures on the Scriptures. On all sides the ecclesiastical authorities were beginning to be alarmed with the heretical opinions that were abroad. Colet himself, notwithstanding his high position and his powerful connection, had been in no small danger. He had not only founded and endowed St. Paul's School for the study of pure Latinity—a suspicious circumstance in itself—but he had also ventured to translate the Lord's Prayer into the English language, with comments for the benefit of the unlearned[2]; and the Bishop of London, Fitz James, an

[1] It must have been two or three years later, as he was only licensed for M.A. in 1515. See Editor's Preface.

[2] Colet's *Paternoster* is a brief paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer in English, and is about as inoffensive as any book could possibly be.

ignorant bigot, was anxious to have the dean punished as a heretic[1]. Both Tyndale and Latimer[2] concur in representing Colet's danger as imminent; and but for the esteem of the king, and the friendship of Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, who, as a great admirer of Erasmus, would naturally befriend him, Colet might have met the usual fate of a heretic.

Nor was this the whole of Colet's offending. As Dean of St. Paul's, he had introduced the habit of preaching regularly in the cathedral church, not selecting his texts at random or from the lessons for the day, but choosing some continuous subject, such as one of the Gospels, the Creed, or the Lord's Prayer; his audience was enormous, many persons travelling miles to hear him; and his language was extremely bold. He disapproved of images, auricular confession and purgatory, and censured the vices and ignorance of the clergy. And to crown all his offences, he was appointed to preach before Convocation at its assembly in 1512, and he pronounced on that occasion an address which, for the plainness with which he exposed the greed and carelessness of the clergy, and especially of the bishops and dignitaries in whose hearing he was speaking, is excelled only by the famous sermon of Latimer before the Convocation of 1535[3]. Rumours of heresy began to be whispered in several dioceses. The Bishops of London and Lincoln especially found their dioceses seriously infested with heretics; and their inquiries disclosed to them that the sermons of Colet had largely contributed to produce dissatisfaction with the

[1] Fitz James is said to have been the hero of the story told by Erasmus in his *Encomium Moriæ*. During a debate in Convocation some cautious prelate had asked whether there were really any express sanction in Scripture for putting heretics to death. On which Fitz James immediately cited the words of St. Paul, *hereticum devita:* the ignorant man supposing St. Paul to mean not "avoid a heretic," but "put a heretic out of life—kill him." The story, however, seems to have been a sort of standing joke against the clergy, told of more than one of the great pillars of the Church in those days. See Tyndale's *Works*, Vol. III. p. 215.

[2] Tyndale, Vol. III. p. 168. Latimer's *Sermons*.

[3] The sermon is printed in Knight's *Life of Colet*, and well deserves to be reprinted in our time.

teaching of the Church. Oxford was then in the diocese of Lincoln; and it may not unreasonably be conjectured that the increased diligence in the search for heretical tendencies extended itself to that University where Colet had taught with such distinguished ability, and that this may have induced Tyndale to leave Oxford and repair to Cambridge.

At Cambridge Tyndale would still be surrounded by some of the same influences that the lectures of Colet had diffused at Oxford; for Erasmus, who was then in the height of his popularity, had largely imbibed the spirit of Colet, and his lectures at Cambridge not only introduced into that University a fresh enthusiasm in the study of Greek, but also inaugurated a still more important reform in the current theology of the place, asserting the supremacy of Holy Scripture, and ridiculing the theories of the schoolmen and their fantastic systems of interpretation. Under such an instructor, renowned throughout Europe for eloquence and learning, Tyndale may for some time have prosecuted his studies in Greek and in theology; listening with intense interest to the fierce controversies which the bold innovations of his teacher excited in the University, and reading with delighted laughter that wonderful satire, the *Encomium Moriæ*, in which Erasmus covered with ineffaceable ridicule the defenders of the old traditional ignorance. Such a teacher could not fail to excite feelings of lively enthusiasm in the heart of any sympathising disciple; and we know that, however much Tyndale might in later years regret the deficiencies in his master's theology or condemn his vacillating timidity, he in his earlier life regarded him with feelings of the most profound admiration. He was a diligent reader of the works of the great Dutch scholar. It may have been the teaching of Erasmus that first suggested to him his noble design of translating the Word of God into the native language of his countrymen. It is certainly a singular coincidence that Tyndale first intimated his great purpose almost in the very words of his former instructor.

"I totally dissent," Erasmus said in his Exhortation[1], "from those who are unwilling that the Sacred Scriptures, translated into the vulgar tongue, should be read by private individuals, as if Christ had taught such subtle doctrines that they can with difficulty be understood by a very few theologians, or as if the strength of the Christian religion lay in men's ignorance of it. The mysteries of kings it were perhaps better to conceal, but Christ wishes His mysteries to be published as widely as possible. I would wish even all women to read the Gospel and the Epistles of St. Paul. *And I wish they were translated into all languages of all people, that they might be read and known, not merely by the Scotch and the Irish, but even by the Turks and the Saracens. I wish that the husbandman may sing parts of them at his plough, that the weaver may warble them at his shuttle, that the traveller may with their narratives beguile the weariness of the way.*" When Tyndale avowed his intention of translating the Word of God into English, it was, as we shall see, in terms which were in truth the echo of these noble words of Erasmus.

Tyndale's residence at Cambridge served some other purpose than merely to mature his knowledge of Greek and polite Latinity. He was there, according to Foxe, "further ripened in the knowledge of God's Word." This may have been partly the fruit of the lectures of Erasmus, partly the result of his own careful study and reflection, aided by that Divine Teacher whose continual help he doubtless implored. Something also may have been due to intercourse with a pious fellow-student. Bilney, we know, was contemporary with Tyndale at Cambridge, to whatever period Tyndale's residence in the University may be assigned; and from the allusions which he makes to Bilney it seems probable that Tyndale knew that gentle Reformer. The date and the story of Bilney's conversion are well known from his own beautiful letters to Tunstal. For years he had been anxiously seeking some remedy for the uneasiness that filled

[1] Erasmus, *Paraclesis: Works*, Vol. IV. pp. 140, 141.

his soul with dismay; he had tried pardons and penances; and at length he "had heard speak of Jesus," and forthwith he knew in himself that he was healed[1]. This was, as he has told us, immediately after the first appearance of the New Testament of Erasmus, that is, in 1516; and it seems exceedingly probable that between the year of his own conversion and the time when Tyndale left Cambridge, Bilney, who was an active though an unobtrusive proselytiser, may have come into contact with Tyndale, and that their mutual intercourse may have contributed in both to a deeper love for the Word of God and a riper knowledge of it.

Of the many illustrious contemporaries prosecuting their studies around him, and who were destined in another generation to play so conspicuous a part in the history of England, Tyndale makes no mention; and he could not, of course, have divined their future career. Cranmer he knew only as a quiet, hard-working student; Gardiner was a clever college-tutor; Latimer was a grave and upright man, a great admirer of the schoolmen, and a determined opponent of Greek and of the study of Holy Scripture. It may be doubted, also, whether Tyndale was in any way associated with that group of younger disciples whom Bilney afterwards drew around him, and who were subsequently selected by Wolsey to be transferred to his new college at Oxford. Tyndale himself is said to have been chosen by the cardinal's agents; but long before the magnificent foundation was ready for the reception of its inmates, he had not only left the University, but had bid farewell to his native country. John Fryth, the future companion of Tyndale in his exile, is commonly said to have been his contemporary at Cambridge, and is believed there "to have received the seed of the Gospel" from him; but it is scarcely probable that they could have met at the University. Fryth had just completed his terms for Bachelor of Arts in December, 1525, and could not, therefore, have entered the University

[1] See the letters in *Foxe*, Vol. IV. pp. 635, etc. See also Demaus, *Life of Latimer*, p. 26.

earlier than the commencement of 1522; and if Tyndale had not then left Cambridge, his stay afterwards must have been so short as to render the traditionary intimacy with Fryth highly improbable.

Long before the period at which we have now arrived, Tyndale had made his choice of the profession to which his life was to be consecrated. As usual, however, no record of the time or place of his ordination has yet been discovered. It is not very likely that he was ordained in the diocese of his native place, that much neglected diocese of Worcester, which Cardinal Wolsey professed to be administering under the authority of its non-resident Italian prelate. It is more probable that he was admitted into orders at Lincoln, for the University of Oxford was within the limits of that huge Mercian bishopric. One biographer, indeed, supposes that he has discovered both the time and place of Tyndale's ordination. The Register of Warham, then Bishop of London, records that at a general ordination, held in St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield, by his suffragan Thomas, Bishop of Pavada, *William Tyndale* of the diocese of Carlisle was, by letters dimissory, ordained priest to the nunnery of Lambley[1]. This took place on Saturday, March 11th, 1503[2], and it has been maintained that here we have the official record of the ordination of the future martyr. But it is obvious at a glance that there are many strong objections to this hypothesis. According to ecclesiastical precedent, the person who was ordained priest in March, 1503, could not have been born later than 1478; but this was two years *before* the birth of Sir Thomas More, and is, therefore, incompatible with what we know of

[1] Lambley is on the borders of Northumberland and Cumberland, but in the former county.

[2] The Register says 1502; but that 1503 was meant is evident, not only from the fact that official documents reckoned the year as beginning at Lady Day, but even more so from the fact that this Saturday is described as being the Saturday in Ember week, which fell on March 11th in 1503, but on Feb. 19 in 1502. I note this because Stubbs, in his almost immaculate *Registrum Sacrum Anglicanum*, represents Thomas, Bishop of Pavada, as ceasing to officiate in 1502.

Tyndale's age. Moreover, there is no authority of any kind, either written or traditional, for representing Tyndale as belonging to the diocese of Carlisle, which is, indeed, quite inconsistent with the statement that he was born in the borders of Wales. Nothing, in fact, is more natural than to find a Tyndale in the abbey of Lambley; for Lambley is in Tynedale, a few miles from the original seat of Tyndale's ancestors; and the name was doubtless a common one in the locality.

The same biographer[1] has also imagined that Tyndale, subsequently to his appointment as priest in Lambley, entered the monastery of the Observants at Greenwich. This suggestion is founded upon an inscription in a book preserved in the library of St. Paul's Cathedral; which declares that the book belonged to John Tyndale, and was given by him to the monastery in Greenwich on the day that his son *William* took the vows in 1508. There is no doubt that Tyndale makes very frequent allusions to the Observants of Greenwich, and shows himself curiously well-informed in their affairs; and there is also an expression in one of Tyndale's works which, to a hasty reader, seems to admit that he was "a brother of Greenwich[2]." These circumstances, however, which seem to countenance the theory, can be most satisfactorily explained; and, in truth, it is inconceivable that anyone who has read Sir Thomas More's works with reasonable care should for a moment believe that Tyndale had ever taken the vows of a monk. On the subject of the perpetual obligation of monastic vows Sir Thomas More entertained very strong opinions, which he never loses any opportunity of expressing; and as in all his abuse of Tyndale he never once calls him *friar* or *apostate*,

[1] George Offor, in the preface to his reprint of Tyndale's octavo New Testament.

[2] In the preface to the *Wicked Mammon* he speaks of "Jerome a brother of Greenwich also," which *seems* to imply that Tyndale was a brother of Greenwich, though the context makes it clear that the meaning is, a brother of Greenwich as well as Roye, previously mentioned, not as well as the writer. Yet modern writers, who boast of their research, continue to repeat the assertion that Tyndale was a monk!

but carefully distinguishes him from the friars, it may be accepted as indisputable that the William Tyndale who joined the Observants was not the William Tyndale who translated the New Testament.

The same uncertainty that we have so often had occasion to regret, rests upon the reasons which induced Tyndale to leave Cambridge. A scholar, superior to most of his contemporaries, and conscious of more than ordinary abilities, he might have found in the University a congenial residence, or might, not unreasonably, have hoped for some sphere of labour proportioned to his capacities. He left Cambridge, however, in the very humble capacity of tutor to the children of "Master Walsh, a knight of Gloucestershire." The precise date of his thus leaving Cambridge cannot be assigned; but as his eldest pupil was not born till 1516, the latest date that is compatible with other ascertained facts is evidently the most probable. The tradition of Tyndale's preaching in Bristol in 1520 will be subsequently shown to be a mere baseless conjecture; and, on the whole, we are inclined to assign the close of 1521 as the date of his leaving the University.

Here, therefore, ends Tyndale's preparatory training. His academic career, with its learned leisure and its mimic warfare of tongues, was finished; henceforth he had to bear his share in the real conflict of life. It was, perhaps, an eager desire to mingle in the real duties of life that induced him to turn his back upon the leisure of the University; it was certainly neither any flaw in his character, nor any want of appreciation of the studies of the place; for Sir Thomas More, his great antagonist, allows that before he left England, "Tyndale was well-known for a man of right good living, studious, and well-learned in Scripture[1]." Of such a man the University had much need; and for his work, the calm seclusion of a seat of learning might seem to be specially adapted; but the stern discipline of life was wanted to qualify him for his task. Not surrounded by books and friends in the

[1] Sir Thomas More's *Dialogue*.

learned retirement of the ancient halls of Oxford or Cambridge, but an exile in a foreign land, hunted by the untiring animosity of his enemies, was Tyndale to accomplish that glorious work for which England owes him an eternal debt of gratitude[1].

[1] Of his personal history at the Universities, Tyndale mentions only one trifling fact, that he had a pupil, *John Tisen*, who subsequently entered the service of Tunstal, and whose "red beard and black-reddish head" Tyndale subsequently saw in Antwerp, not without suspicion that he was a secret emissary sent to apprehend him. See Tyndale's letter to Fryth under the year 1532. [Mr. Boase suggests that the entry in the Oxford Register, 1524, 'Tyson or Tison, John, supplicated for B.C.L. 18 July 1524, admitted 1 August, supplicated for B.CAN.L. December 1530,' may refer to this man.—EDITOR.]

CHAPTER II.

TYNDALE'S LIFE AT LITTLE SODBURY.

A.D. 1521–1523.

THE manor-house of Little Sodbury, where Tyndale was first introduced to the realities of life outside the walls of the Universities, was in his native county of Gloucester, almost within sight of the spot where he had spent the years of his childhood. The house is charmingly situated on the south-western slope of the Cotswolds, and enjoys a magnificent prospect over the richly-wooded vale of the Severn, to the distant hills of Wales. Though somewhat shorn of its former dignity, and only in part inhabited, the house is still, in the main, intact; time, indeed, has dealt gently with it, and has added to the beauties of its graceful and varied architecture those mellowing touches which delight the eye of the lover of the picturesque. It is evidently in no material respect altered since the time when Tyndale and his pupils used to issue from its spacious porch to climb the Cotswolds, or to ramble across the fields to the neighbouring village of Chipping Sodbury; and the original arrangement and destination of the various apartments are tolerably obvious to the glance even of the least practised antiquary. The great dining-hall, in which Tyndale's voice was so often heard debating theological questions with the clergy of the neighbourhood, around the hospitable board of Sir John Walsh, wants little but appropriate furniture to recall its former appearance; and the whole mansion furnishes unmistakable proof that it was the residence of a gentleman of considerable wealth and position in the county.

One most interesting appendage of the old manor-house has, unfortunately, been destroyed within the last few years. The little church of St. Adeline, which stood close behind the house, and in which Tyndale, beyond any doubt, must have officiated, and made his earliest appearance as a preacher, was taken down so recently as 1858, and rebuilt in a situation more convenient for the parishioners; but part of the western entrance, and two magnificent yew-trees, which must have been large even in Tyndale's time, still remain to mark the spot[1].

Behind the manor-house the hill rises almost perpendicularly, completely prohibiting the approach of the bleak north-eastern blasts. A few minutes' exertion conveys the traveller to the crest of the breezy Cotswolds, crowned with picturesque clumps of beeches visible for miles; and from the table-land on the summit, where Margaret of Anjou encamped before the fatal field of Tewkesbury, Tyndale must often have looked upon the wooded heights of Nibley and Stinchcombe, and the level vale beyond, where his relatives were then established. Altogether the manor-house of Little Sodbury is the most interesting, as it is the most authentic locality associated with Tyndale's active life in England. It is the only place of which we can definitely affirm, "under this very roof Tyndale spent several of the most important months of his life;" and it was in this house that he formed and first announced his great purpose, if God spared him, to translate the Holy Scriptures into his native tongue, that what had hitherto been confined to the learned, might be open to all who could read[2].

The Walshes of Little Sodbury were one of the rising and prosperous families of the county of Gloucester. John Walsh

[1] A careful drawing of the interesting church was fortunately made, under the care of Mr. Fry of Bristol, to whom I am indebted for a copy.

[2] The manor-house is easily accessible either from Bath or Bristol. It is about an hour's walk from Yate, a station on the Bristol and Gloucester railway, the road leading through the old-fashioned village of Chipping Sodbury and across the fields. The view and the inspection of the house will abundantly repay all who admire the beautiful and picturesque, or are interested in the history of one of England's noblest worthies.

had, in 1485, come into possession of the manor-house by his marriage to the heiress of the property. His son, the patron and employer of Tyndale, a stalwart and expert man-at-arms, had been champion to Henry VIII. on some occasions; and having been fortunate enough to secure the good graces of his sovereign, he was knighted, and received the more substantial reward of the neighbouring manor of Old Sodbury, which had devolved to the crown from Ann, Countess of Warwick. The handsome royal favourite had still further improved his position in the county by marrying Anne, daughter of Sir Robert Poyntz of Iron-Acton, a neighbouring family of ancient lineage, which could boast of alliances with some of the best blood in England. In consequence of these fortunate matrimonial alliances, and of the generous favour of the sovereign, Sir John Walsh was a man of very considerable importance; a point of no small consequence to Tyndale, as it subsequently secured him a powerful protector when the boldness of his opinions had excited the hostility of the neighbouring clergy.

Tyndale's position at the manor-house of Little Sodbury must have been that of chaplain rather than of tutor; in fact, we are probably doing no injustice to Sir John Walsh and his lady, if we consider the employment of a distinguished scholar from the University in the capacity of chaplain as a piece of ambitious ostentation on their part, which was intended to mark their sense of the high position at which they had now arrived. Their children were mere infants, more likely to profit from their nurse than from a learned tutor. We have no means of determining the precise time at which Tyndale entered upon this new employment[1]; but there seems no sufficient reason

[1] Anderson (*Annals*, Vol. I. p. 30) quotes Sayers as declaring that Tyndale preached in Bristol "about A.D. 1520;" and infers that he must have been at Little Sodbury in that year. Sayers says so, it is true; not, however, as Anderson by mistake asserts, "from old authorities," but simply from conjecture, as may be seen by examining the passage in his *Memoirs of Bristol*, Vol. II. p. 215. Through the courtesy of the treasurer of Bristol, I have been permitted to examine the oldest kalendar of that city, that called the Mayor's Kalendar; and I have also inspected another preserved in the Subscription Library, but neither of these makes the

for believing that he resided more than two years at Little Sodbury, and as he was certainly in London before the close of 1523, it may be assumed that it was some time towards the close of the year 1521 that he became tutor to Sir John's children. And even at the close of 1521, the eldest of Sir John's sons was only six years of age, and little likely, therefore, to give any very serious employment to Tyndale's energies, at least as an instructor. Tyndale would thus have ample time for reading and reflection; and in a house such as that of Sir John Walsh, constantly resorted to by the gentlemen and clerical dignitaries of the neighbourhood, much must have been daily seen and heard to excite reflection in any earnest soul.

Since the time when Tyndale left his home to reside in the Universities, no improvement had taken place in the religious condition of his native county. The bishop of the diocese, who was responsible for the spiritual oversight of its population, resided a thousand miles off, in Italy; indeed, there was no resident bishop from 1512, when Sylvester de Gigliis retired to Rome, till 1535, when Hugh Latimer was consecrated the first reforming prelate of the long-neglected see. In the absence of the chief ecclesiastical authority who ought to have provided for the religious wants of the counties of Gloucester and Worcester, his duties were divided between Cardinal Wolsey, who was also, of course, non-resident, and far too deeply engrossed in other matters to pay much heed to them, and the chancellor of the diocese, who, during Tyndale's residence at Little Sodbury, was Dr. Parker, a furious bigot, whom we shall speedily meet again in this biography. In 1521, the bishop of the diocese died at Rome, but his place was filled by another Italian prelate, no other than Julio de Medici, who as Clement VII. was subsequently appealed to in the momentous question of Henry's divorce.

slightest allusion to Tyndale, nor is there any authority for assigning his residence at Sodbury to such an early period as 1520, when his pupils could scarce walk alone.

On his resignation of the see, after a few months' episcopate, the bishopric was once more conferred upon a non-resident Italian prelate, Jerome de Ghinucci.

The time had gone by when such a scandalous state of affairs could exist unquestioned. Fear of authority might suppress any practical manifestation of insubordination; but authority could not restrain the shrewd remarks of intelligent observers; nor could it prevent men perceiving that even the highest dignitaries of the Church, in their anxiety to increase their revenues, thought little of the most flagrant disregard of the most sacred duties. The county of Gloucester, moreover, though far removed from the metropolis and the Universities, had not escaped the influence of that great intellectual revival which had re-awakened the nations of Europe to mental activity. Bristol, then the second city in England, had given a favourable reception to the Lollard preachers; the merchants of the city were conspicuous for their energy; and the citizens were at all times distinguished for the freedom of their opinions, and the zeal with which they entered upon the discussion of all religious questions. Lutheran books, though rigorously prohibited, were probably not unknown amongst the imports that floated up the Avon to the warehouses of the Bristol merchants. Amongst the neighbouring gentry were several men of high character and considerable learning; and religion was the all-engrossing theme of the time, so that Tyndale found himself surrounded at Sir John Walsh's table by the same atmosphere of theological controversy in which he had moved at the University.

Of this interesting period of Tyndale's life Foxe has fortunately preserved an unusually copious and trustworthy account. Even as perused in the ordinary editions of the *Acts and Monuments*, the narrative strikes the attentive reader as the authentic record of a contemporary: but the first English edition of Foxe, that of 1563, makes it quite clear that this part of the work was supplied to the Martyrologist by one who had it from Tyndale's own lips. Foxe

has not mentioned his authority, but we feel strongly convinced that his informant was Richard Webb, a native of the village of Chipping Sodbury, and subsequently a servant of Latimer, whose rectory of West Kington was only a few miles distant. This Webb may possibly have been a convert of Tyndale's; in 1532 he was brought before Sir Thomas More for circulating prohibited books in Bristol; and he was alive when Foxe wrote his *Acts and Monuments*, and furnished him, as he acknowledges, with some valuable materials[1].

But whoever was Foxe's informant, it is most important to observe that his record of Tyndale's life at Little Sodbury rests upon the authority of a reporter who had it from Tyndale himself, and is therefore entitled to the highest credit. In the following extracts the words of the original narrator are introduced as given in Foxe's first edition, instead of the less graphic narrative which the Martyrologist substituted in his later editions: "The said Tyndale being schoolmaster to the said Master Walsh's children, and being in good favour with his master, sat most commonly at his own table, which kept a good ordinary, having resort to him many times divers great-beneficed men, as abbots, deans, archdeacons, and other divers doctors and learned men. Amongst whom commonly was talk of learning, as well of Luther and Erasmus Roterodamus, as of opinions in the Scripture. The said Master Tyndale being learned, and which had been a student of divinity in Cambridge, and had therein taken degree of school, did many times therein shew his mind and learning. Wherein as those men and Master Tyndale did vary in opinions and judgments, then Master Tyndale would shew them on the book the places by open and manifest Scripture; the which continued for a certain season divers and sundry times, until in the continuance thereof those great beneficed doctors waxed weary and bear [bore] a secret grudge in their hearts against Master Tyndale[2]."

[1] *Foxe*, Vol. IV. p. 129. More's *Confutation*, p. 727.

[2] *Foxe*, p. 514; Edition of 1563.

We can easily realise the scene which the rough graphic language of the narrator here depicts. Beneficed clergymen and lordly abbots, whose learning had become rusty from disuse, and who hated the teaching of Erasmus and Luther as odious and heretical novelties, must have been sadly disconcerted by the shrewd and determined "schoolmaster," fresh from the University, an expert theological controversialist, with his terrible matter-of-fact habit of confronting their opinions with the plain and manifest words of Scripture printed in "the book." That in such encounters he should generally remain master of the field we can perfectly believe: and that his antagonists, annoyed at the presumption of the young scholar who dared to controvert the opinions of wealthy ecclesiastical dignitaries, and confounded by his arguments, should bear a secret grudge against him, is only too truly in keeping with human nature to excite any doubt. The narrative resumes:—

"So upon a time some of those beneficed doctors had Master Walsh and the lady his wife, at a supper or banquet, there having among them talk at will without any gainsaying: and the supper or banquet being done, and Master Walsh and the lady his wife come home, they called for Master Tyndale, and talked with him of such communication as had been, where they came fro [from], and of their opinions. Master Tyndale thereunto made answer agreeable to the truth of God's Word, and in reproving of their false opinions. The Lady Walsh being a stout woman, and *as Master Tyndale did report her* to be wise, being there no more but they three, Master Walsh, his wife and Master Tyndale: 'Well,' said she, 'there was such a doctor, he may dispend [spend] two hundred pound by the year, another, one hundred pound, and another, three hundred pound; and what think ye, were it reason that we should believe you before them so great, learned, and beneficed men?' Master Tyndale, hearing her, gave her no answer; nor after that had but small arguments

against such, for he perceived it would not help in effect to the contrary."

Tyndale had the good sense to perceive that there was small hope of persuading such a disputant by appealing merely to reason and Scripture. There was another argument more likely to impress persons who estimated the soundness of opinions by the annual income of those who entertained them; he might appeal to the authority of a great name. Erasmus was still the great model of Tyndale's opinions; and if it could be shown beyond any doubt, that those very doctrines and opinions which the neighbouring abbots and wealthy doctors condemned, were maintained by the illustrious scholar—with whose praises all Europe was ringing, who was in high favour with many of the most exalted rank in England, and especially with the primate and the king—then it might be hoped that even Lady Walsh would begin to appreciate the force of arguments which came recommended by such weight.

It was probably, therefore, as an important measure of self-defence that Tyndale undertook the translation of one of the most popular of the works of Erasmus—the *Enchiridion Militis Christiana*, or, Manual of a Christian Soldier. This little treatise had been originally written in 1501, shortly after Erasmus' first visit to England; and it was one of the earliest of that long series of works in which, with terse and graceful Latinity, the author attempted to ridicule the popular misconception which placed religion in scholastic dogmas and ritual observances. As originally issued the work was remarkable rather for the graces of its style than for the strength of its opinions; but when the controversy between Luther and the Pope had deeply excited the minds of all thinking men, Erasmus re-issued it with a fresh preface, written in a style of boldness and fire which must in calmer moments have alarmed the author himself, and which is in truth not altogether in keeping with the sober, rhetorical, half-classical, half-Christian manual to which it is prefixed. Thus re-

introduced to public notice, the book became immensely popular; it was translated into many languages and exercised a wonderful influence all over Europe[1].

Of a book thus famous in its day, which was evidently highly valued by Tyndale, and on which he first employed his skill and learning as a translator, the reader will not disdain to peruse a very few sentences. The original work had been censured because it did not treat its subject according to the methods of the schoolmen; the author thus defends himself in his new preface:—

"I am content that my book be deficient in acuteness if only it be pious. Let it not train men for the discussions of the Sorbonne[2], provided it train them for Christian peace. Let it be unserviceable for theological debating, provided it be useful for religious living. Besides, what is the use of discussing what every one discusses? Who is not engaged now-a-days in theological questions? What else do the swarms of scholastics do? There are almost as many commentaries on the *Sentences*[3] as there are names of theologians. What limit is there to the number of compilers, men who mingle over again various matters, and like chemists manufacture new things out of old, old out of new, one out of many, and again many out of one? How is it possible that a huge mass of such books can train men up to live well, when the whole of one's life would not suffice to read them? As if a doctor were to prescribe to a man labouring under a rapid disease, that he must read the works of *Jacobus a partibus* and all similar treatises, in order to discover in them how to restore his health, while in the mean time death will have carried him off, and there will be no possibility of helping any one at that rate.... To say nothing of their treating things in a meagre and cold manner, how many people have leisure to read so

[1] See Seebohm's *Oxford Reformers*.

[2] The Divinity School in Paris, the headquarters of Scholasticism.

[3] A compilation by Peter Lombard, who was usually called in consequence the Master of the *Sentences*; the Bible, in fact, of the schoolmen.

many volumes, or who could carry about with him the works of Thomas Aquinas? And yet every one is bound to live well, and Christ has wished the way to good living to be easy to all; not through the trackless labyrinths of debates, but through sincere faith and love unfeigned, accompanied by the 'hope which maketh not ashamed.' Finally, let the great Rabbis, who must of course be few, study those huge volumes; but, nevertheless, we must in the mean time provide for the ignorant multitude for whom also Christ died."

"Would any one," he asks, "attempt to convert the Turks to the Christian religion by submitting to them the works of Occam, or Durandus, or Scotus, or Gabriel, or Alvarus? [All great scholastic doctors.] What will they think when they shall have heard those difficult and perplexing subtleties about form and essence and relation; especially when they see that on these points, so far are those great professors of religion from agreeing, that they contend with each other till they are pale in the face, till they scold each other, spit upon each other, even till they attack each other with their fists—when they see the Dominicans fighting in all manner of ways for their beloved Thomas [Aquinas], the Franciscans on the other hand, with joined shields, defending the most subtle doctor and the seraphic doctor [Scotus and Bonaventura]; some speaking as nominalists, some as realists? Christ has not died in order that wealth, abundance, arms, and the rest of the pomp of an earthly kingdom, which formerly were possessed by heathen, or at least Gentile princes, should now be in the possession of a few priests not unlike heathens.... In my opinion, it would be a far more appropriate plan for converting the Turks if we were to devolve upon some pious and learned men the duty of compiling from the perfectly pure fountains of the Evangelists and the Apostles, and the most approved commentators, an abridgment of the whole philosophy of Christ, simple yet learned, brief but not obscure. Those things which pertain to faith, let them be expressed in

the fewest possible articles; those which pertain to good living, let them also be expressed in few words, and so expressed that men may understand that the yoke of Christ is easy and light, and not harsh; that they may see that in the clergy they have found fathers and not tyrants, pastors and not robbers, that they are invited to salvation, and not dragged to slavery.... Amid the general darkness that prevails, amid such tumults in the world, in such a conflict of human opinions, to what refuge shall we flee sooner than to that truly sacred anchorage of Evangelical doctrine? What man of real piety does not perceive with sighs that this is far the most corrupt of all ages? When did ever tyranny or avarice prevail more widely or with greater impunity? When was more importance ever attached to mere ceremonies? When did iniquity abound with more licentiousness? When was charity so cold? What is said, what is read, what is heard, what is decreed, except that which savours of ambition and gain?"

With equal boldness, Erasmus proceeds to indicate the vices to which the clergy of all ranks were liable, and by which they were losing the respect of the thinking men amongst the laity: the greed of the bishops, who were perpetually plundering their dioceses by their exactions, the superstition and hypocrisy of the religious orders, the avarice and ambition of the preachers, the wrangling of the theologians. Above all, he poured out his severest censure upon that one universal fault which affected all ranks of ecclesiastics, the wretched perversion of judgment, which led them to consider the violation of any of the ceremonies and ordinances of the Church as involving a far greater amount of delinquency, than the grossest neglect of all the ordinary obligations of Christian morality. A priest might be a gambler, a fighter, totally ignorant, entirely immersed in secular affairs, a sycophant, a liar, a calumniator, and yet might escape blame if only he were careful to observe that enforced law of celibacy, which, though a law of the Church only and not an

ordinance of God, was deemed of more consequence than any other qualification in the clergy.

"If," says he, with truth, "it had been only a slight danger to religion that lay concealed in ceremonies, Paul would not have spoken so sharply against them in all his Epistles. Not that we in all cases condemn ceremonies, when used in moderation, but that we deny that the beginning and ending of religion consist in them. St. Augustine even forbade the clergy, that he brought up in his house, to any special dress; and said, that if they wished to be commended to the people it should be by their life, and not by their dress. Now-a-days, what new, what extravagant ceremonies! Yet this is not what I find fault with; what I am surprised at is, that too much importance is attached to those things which, perhaps, ought to be blamed, and too little to those which alone ought to be looked to. I am not abusing the Franciscans or the Benedictines for embracing the rule of their order, but because some of them value their rule above the Gospel. . . I am not abusing them because some live on fish, others on vegetables, others on eggs, but I warn them that they are seriously mistaken if, like the Jews of old, they look upon such things as these as proofs of their holiness, and set themselves above others on account of trifles of this sort, invented by men of little minds; whilst they consider it as no fault at all to assail a man's good name with lies. Neither Christ nor His Apostles have anywhere given directions about the choice of food; St. Paul frequently despises it: but Christ does condemn all violent slander; the writings of the Apostles abhor it; and yet on the one matter of no importance we wish to appear scrupulously religious, on the other of great moment we are bold and fearless."

Erasmus was well aware that for thus writing he would be charged with instigating the laity to rebel against their ecclesiastical guides; but he was not to be deterred by the fear of any such imputations. It was all very well, he said, for the clergy to praise the virtue of obedience; but Christians were

called to liberty; and it was both impossible and unnatural to attempt to keep men for ever in the ignorance and submission of children. As to religious vows, Erasmus wished that it was forbidden by law that any one should bind himself by such obligations till he had reached the age of thirty, when he might be supposed capable of knowing himself, and understanding the real power of religion; and even with this enactment there was no fear, he suggests, of the monasteries failing to find inhabitants, as there were plenty of fools in the world to replenish them. And as to the vow of chastity in particular, he did not hesitate to say that there was very little difference in point of merit between celibacy and chaste matrimony.

"In fine," he concludes, "let no one foolishly pride himself because his way of living differs from others; but in every species of life let this be the common desire of all, prosecuted with all their energy, to reach that goal which Christ has set before all men; and when every one has done his best, let him not be like the Pharisee in the Gospel, who boasts of his good deeds before God, 'I fast twice in the week,' etc.; but let him, according to the advice of Christ, say, and say from his heart, and for himself, not for others, 'I am an unprofitable servant, I have done what it was my duty to do.' No one more truly possesses faith than the man who thus distrusts himself; no one is farther removed from true religion than the man who seems to himself to be extremely religious."

To appreciate aright the boldness of such words as these, we must remember that when they were written, Luther still spoke of Leo X. as "our most Holy Lord;" and professed himself willing to throw himself at the feet of his Holiness, and to submit implicitly to his judgment; and it was not till two months after the writing of this preface that Luther took the first of his bold steps, and appealed from "the most Holy Father, the Pope, ill-informed, to the most Holy Lord and Father in Christ Leo, tenth of that name, better informed." The treatise to which the preface was prefixed, being an early

production of its author, bore several marks of less mature intellect. It is written with excellent sense, in scrupulously Ciceronian Latin, and is remarkable mainly for the extraordinary contempt with which Erasmus speaks of the literal interpretation of Scripture, and the undue value which he attaches to its spiritual or allegorical signification[1]. Yet even in this treatise, written so early as 1501, Erasmus expressed himself with the same clearness on the superstition and uselessness of many of the ceremonies of religion and the observances of the monks. "Monkery," said he, "is not piety; it is merely a manner of life which may be useful or useless according to the temperament of body and mind of the man who adopts it; piety consists neither in food nor in dress, nor in any outward observance."

These brief extracts will have made it sufficiently evident to the reader, that Tyndale could scarcely have found any better means of supporting those opinions of his which had given so much umbrage to the neighbouring clergy. Whether he wished to assert the supremacy of Scripture or to censure the laborious trifling of the schoolmen, to attack the gross abuses of the religious orders or to condemn the extravagant importance that was attached to ceremonies and ritual observances, he could boldly appeal to Erasmus as unquestionably pronouncing in his favour; and opinions which might have seemed rash and ignorant in a young scholar fresh from the University, would gain an enormous accession of weight when supported by the authority of the most illustrious scholar in Europe. It seems natural to conclude that the translation of the *Enchiridion* was intended by Tyndale to be at some convenient time committed to the press; but there is no record of its ever having been printed. He took his manuscript with him to London; and Humphrey Monmouth, who so kindly entertained him in the metropolis, speaks of two copies of the book which had been extensively circulated amongst the clergy and others without exciting any opposition; but these

[1] "Citra allegoriam sterilis est Scriptura," says he.

were, beyond question, consigned to the flames along with Tyndale's sermons and letters, when he had been publicly denounced as a heretic, and it was dangerous to be in possession of any of his writings[1].

The temporary and immediate purpose, however, for which Tyndale had undertaken the translation, was most successfully accomplished. In the words of the old narrator, "Then did he translate into English a book called, *as I remember*, *Enchiridion Militis Christiani*, the which being translated [he] delivered to his master and lady. And after they had read that book, those great prelates were no more so often called to the house, nor, when they came, had the cheer nor countenance as they were wont to have; the which they did well perceive, and that it was by the means and incensing of Master Tyndale, and at last came no more there."

Such was the issue of Tyndale's first appearance in public as a theological disputant. His opponents were discomfited, and Sir John Walsh and his lady were gained over to his opinions. By this victory Tyndale had considerably improved his own position, and secured for himself peace and respect in the Manor-house where he resided; whilst he was well aware at the same time that he had provoked the bitter resentment of the clergy, and that he must be prepared to face the consequences of their indignation.

The ignominious repulse at Sir John Walsh's dinner-table was not the only provocation of which the neighbouring priests had to complain. His duties as instructor of the very juvenile family at Sodbury Manor could not have occupied much of the time of an energetic man like Tyndale; nor would his ministrations as family chaplain in the quaint little church behind the Manor-house be any very serious tax upon his industry. A larger field of labour lay close at hand; he began to preach in the adjacent villages, and used also to

[1] Herbert in his edition of *Ames* (Vol. I. p. 189) mentions an English translation of the *Enchiridion*, printed in 1532 by Wynken de Worde, and ascribes it to Tyndale; but this is clearly a mistake.

repair to the great city of Bristol, and preach to the crowd that collected around him on the College-green. Such a proceeding was sure to be warmly resented by men who were still sore from the chagrin of their recent discomfiture. His conduct and his opinions were freely canvassed by no friendly critics. "These blind and rude priests," says Foxe, "flocking together to the alehouse, for that was their preaching-place, raged and railed against him; affirming that his sayings were heresy, adding moreover unto his sayings, of their own heads, more than ever he spake[1]." They determined accordingly to avail themselves of the power which the ecclesiastical organisation of the country placed within their grasp, for silencing the voice of this troublesome preacher.

The bishop of the diocese, who would naturally have been invoked to protect the Church against this threatened inroad of heresy, was, as has been already remarked, non-resident; and Wolsey, who farmed the bishopric, was also at a distance, and not likely to pay much heed to what would seem to him a mere trifling squabble amongst some country clergy. But a new Chancellor, Parker, had recently been elevated to the chief local administration of the diocese; and his violent temper and hatred of all innovations pointed him out as exceedingly likely to welcome any accusations of heresy, and to treat with sufficient severity any suspected persons. Tyndale was accordingly secretly accused to the Chancellor; and preparations were made in the same clandestine manner for securing his condemnation. A sitting of the Chancellor was appointed, at which all the priests of the neighbourhood were summoned to appear, Tyndale, of course, being summoned with the rest. He was not aware of the accusations that had been lodged against him, but he had some misgivings that evil was designed. "Whether," says Foxe, in the words of his informant, "he had knowledge by [*i.e.* of] their threatenings,

[1] *Foxe*, Vol. v. p. 117. Latimer, who lived in the same neighbourhood some ten years later, speaks of the charges against him as having also originated in the ale-house, *inter pocula*.

or that he did suspect that they would lay to his charge, it is *not now perfectly in my mind; but thus he told me*, that he doubted their examinations; so that he, in his going thitherwards, prayed in his mind heartily to God to strengthen him to stand fast in the truth of His Word."

Tyndale himself has given us a brief account of this his first experience of the danger which he was incurring by his opinions. "When I came before the Chancellor, he threatened me grievously, and reviled me, and rated me as though I had been a dog; and laid to my charge [things] whereof there could be none accuser brought forth, as their manner is not to bring forth the accuser; and yet all the priests of the country were the same day there[1]." The violence here ascribed to the Chancellor, it may be remarked, is in perfect keeping with all that we know from other sources of his character. This, it is believed, was the only occasion previous to his last trial on which Tyndale was brought before any ecclesiastical officer on the charge of heretical teaching. Sir Thomas More, indeed, asserts that "he sometimes savoured so shrewdly of heresy that he was once or *twice* examined thereof[2];" but there is no record of any other examination than this informal and futile one before Parker. That there were some *primâ facie* grounds for suspecting him of heresy we may well believe; and that he would have some difficulty in showing that the opinions which he had uttered were in accordance with the recognised standard of orthodoxy, may also be taken for granted; but, on the whole, his defence seems to have been ably and successfully conducted; and he left the court neither branded as a heretic, nor yet trammelled by any oath of abjuration. His antagonist More, it is true, insinuated that because he had "glosed his words with a better sense, and said and swore that he meant no harm, folk were glad to take all to the best[3];" but Tyndale roundly declares that

[1] *Preface to the Pentateuch: Works*, Vol. I. p. 395.
[2] Sir Thomas More's *Works*, Edition 1557, p. 283.
[3] *Ibid.*

he not only never took any oath, but never was asked to take any[1].

Though he had thus come uninjured out of what might have been a most formidable danger, yet Tyndale must have perceived the risk to which he was likely to expose himself by continuing openly to propagate the opinions which had given so much offence. He could not prevent suspicions being entertained, except by a cowardly reticence which was altogether alien to his temper; still he seems to have acted with sufficient caution to give his enemies no hold over him. But the whole transaction was calculated to excite serious reflection in his mind. The opinions which had given so much offence to the neighbouring clergy were taken from that Sacred Book which was admitted to be the perfect standard of truth; and they were supported by the authority of the fathers and of the great scholars of the day, whose words were usually cited with reverence. Why, then, had they been greeted with such general dislike? Tyndale became every day more convinced that this opposition resulted from the extreme ignorance of the clergy with whom he came in contact. They were "a full ignorant sort;" men who knew no more Latin than was contained in the missal, and who did not always know even that; whose reading lay principally in an indecent medical treatise, and in the digest of the *Constitutions* of the Archbishops of Canterbury, which was carefully studied that they might know what amount of "tythes, mortuaries, offerings, customs, and other pillage" might lawfully be claimed as the heritage of God and of holy Church[2].

That such opponents should pervert and misunderstand his meaning, and denounce him at every alehouse as a heretic, was not surprising; it was inevitable; yet it was most melancholy. More melancholy even than this was the fact, daily becoming more apparent to Tyndale, that these men were only too faithful representatives of the spirit that was pre-

[1] Tyndale's *Answer to More*: *Works*, Vol. III. p. 213.

[2] *Preface to the Pentateuch*: *Works*, Vol. I. p. 394.

dominant amongst the rulers of the Church. If he could defend himself by the authority of Holy Scripture and the early fathers, they could allege in support of their views the undeviating practice of several centuries, and the open countenance of all the great dignitaries of the Church. In spite of their ignorance they evidently understood better than he did the actual intentions of the Church's rulers, and were more truly actuated by their spirit. Even with all their ignorance they were better exponents of the current of what was deemed orthodox teaching in the Church than he was: he stood almost alone in his opinions; they were sure of the sympathy and approbation of multitudes. Had there been, then, a general declension of the Church from its original institution? Were the great authorities in the Church acting in open violation of what seemed to be the plain letter of Scripture? Tyndale knew not what to think, or how to answer questions such as these which now began to force themselves upon him; and in his difficulty he went to consult "a certain doctor that dwelt not far off, and had been an old chancellor before to a bishop." Tyndale had already been on terms of familiar acquaintance with him, and knew that he might expect a friendly reception from him, and he therefore frankly disclosed to him the serious doubts which were beginning to rise in his mind. His doubts were resolved in a most unexpected manner. "Do you not know," said the doctor, "that the Pope is the very antichrist which the Scripture speaketh of? But beware what you say; for if you shall be perceived to be of that opinion, it will cost you your life. I have been an officer of his," he added, "but I have given it up and defy him and all his works[1]."

Such an answer formed an epoch in the spiritual life of Tyndale; these bold words gave definite expression to what

[1] *Foxe*, Vol. v. Anderson guesses that this was William Latimer, rector of Weston-sub-Edge, near Toddington. Tyndale certainly knew Tracy of Toddington, and may, therefore, have occasionally been near Weston, though it is a long way from Sodbury.

he had begun to suspect; and the idea thus suggested was ever after held by him as one of the axioms of his religious creed. In the light of this belief, much that had long been obscure and perplexing became clear and intelligible. If the Pope was in very deed the antichrist foretold by the apostles, then it was not surprising that he should use every effort to keep the people in ignorance of that Divine rule which would so completely expose the baselessness of his pretensions; it was only natural that the Holy Scriptures should be buried in unknown tongues, and that the meaning of the passages which occurred in the services of the Church should be obscured by whimsical, allegorical interpretations. Tyndale had a clear, logical head, and was not likely to shrink from the practical conclusion to which these reflections seemed to conduct him. Gradually he would become familiarised with the contemplation of that great work to which his life was to be consecrated, and with which his name will be for ever associated. For it was to his own diligent study of the Word of God that he himself owed all his superior enlightenment; and there was every reason, he might conclude, to believe that others would come to adopt his opinions, if they were equally able to consult the Divine oracles.

It was under the influence of these reflections, therefore, that Tyndale began seriously to contemplate the translation of the New Testament into the English tongue, as the noblest service that he could render to his country, and an indispensable preliminary to any possible reformation of the abuses which abounded in the Church. To us this remedy seems so natural and obvious that we are liable to fail in appreciating its merit and boldness; but in Tyndale's time, such an undertaking would be considered hardly less novel and adventurous than the voyage of Sebastian Cabot from the neighbouring port of Bristol to discover unknown lands beyond untraversed oceans. As yet the Reformation had not produced any vernacular version of Holy Scripture; Luther's translation indeed appeared in September, 1522, about the same time perhaps when

Tyndale had formed his purpose; but there is no reason to believe that it had reached England, or that it in any way suggested Tyndale's work.

Tyndale has himself recorded the circumstances which led him to entertain his great design: "I perceived by experience how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth, except the Scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother-tongue, that they might see the process, order, and meaning of the text; for else, whatsoever truth is taught them, these enemies of all truth quench it again, partly with the smoke of their bottomless pit, whereof thou readest in Apocalypse, chap. ix, that is with apparent [*i.e.* seeming, not real] reasons of sophistry, and traditions of their own making, founded without ground of Scripture, and partly in juggling with the text, expounding it in such a sense as is impossible to gather of the text, if thou see the process, order, and meaning thereof[1]."

Tyndale, it will be perceived, expresses himself with considerable vehemence, for he was at all times bold and outspoken, even to bitterness; but it must be remembered that when he penned those words of indignant remonstrance, he had been for years an exile, hunted from place to place by the implacable resentment of his enemies, and stung to the quick by the fierce and dishonest denunciations which were fulminated by the great dignitaries of the Church against his translation of the New Testament. In the same strain of indignant protest he declares: "In this they be all agreed, to drive you from the knowledge of the Scripture, and that ye shall not have the text thereof in the mother-tongue, and to keep the world still in darkness, to the intent they might sit in the consciences of the people, through vain superstition and false doctrine, to satisfy their filthy lusts, their proud ambition, and unsatiable covetousness, and to exalt their own honour above king and emperor, yea, and above God Himself, A thousand books had they lever [rather] to be put forth against their

[1] *Preface to the Pentateuch: Works*, Vol. I. p. 394.

abominable doings and doctrine, than that the Scripture should come to light. For as long as they may keep that down, they will so darken the right way with the mist of their sophistry; and so tangle them that either rebuke or despise their abominations with arguments of philosophy, and with worldly similitudes and apparent reasons of natural wisdom, and with wresting the Scripture unto their own purpose, clean contrary unto the process, order, and meaning of the text; and so delude them in descanting upon it with allegories, and amaze them, expounding it in many senses before the unlearned lay people, when it hath but one simple, literal sense, whose light the owls cannot abide, that though thou feel in thine heart, and art sure, how that all is false that they say, yet couldst thou not solve their subtle riddles. *Which thing only moved me to translate the New Testament*[1]."

It was scarcely to be expected that a man of Tyndale's temperament should be able to suppress all mention of the great design on which all his thoughts were now concentrated. In spite of the obloquy and danger to which the declaration of his intentions was sure to expose him, he was provoked in the heat of controversy to reveal his secret. "Communing and disputing," says Foxe, "with a certain learned man in whose company he happened to be, he drove him to that issue, that the learned man said, 'We were better be without God's laws than the Pope's.' Master Tyndale hearing that, answered him, 'I defy the Pope and all his laws;' and said, '*If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that*

[1] *Preface to the Pentateuch: Works*, Vol. I. p. 393. There is no doubt that in his reference to "sophistry," "arguments of philosophy," and "subtle riddles," Tyndale was obliquely censuring Sir Thomas More's *Dialogue*, which had shortly before been printed, and which is certainly a most ingenious and subtle defence of the doctrines of the Church of Rome. The last words, "*Which thing only moved me to translate the New Testament*," are important. They indicate that Tyndale's intention to translate was adopted just about the time when he left Little Sodbury, that is, about the end of 1522 or beginning of 1523. Hence they form an incontrovertible reason for rejecting Mr. Offor's theory that Tyndale was the author of a translation of part of the New Testament dated 1502. There seems little reason indeed to doubt that Mr. Offor's fragment, which has unfortunately deceived some writers, is simply a forgery, as Dr. Westcott plainly asserts.

driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou doest[1]*.*'"

Tyndale, in this famous declaration, was simply re-echoing the noble sentiment of Erasmus already quoted; and not only was Erasmus still, so to speak, his spiritual guide, but the work which he was contemplating must have brought him afresh to the study of the writings of the great scholar. For, as became an accomplished Greek scholar, Tyndale was resolved to translate the New Testament from the original language, and not, as Wickliffe had done, from the Latin Vulgate; and the only edition of the Greek text which had yet appeared, the only one at least likely to be in Tyndale's possession, was that issued by Erasmus at Basle, the elegant Latin version of which had attracted the notice of Bilney, and had so unexpectedly been blessed to his soul. The work of Erasmus was, therefore, the constant study of Tyndale in his leisure hours. Perhaps he may have actually commenced at Little Sodbury the first rude drafts of what was to grow into the noblest of English books; and most unquestionably, whether in his study (which is said to have been at the back of the Manor-house, looking out blank upon a patch of steep hill) or in his daily rambles over the Cotswolds, his thoughts were busily engaged upon his great undertaking, calmly and deliberately weighing the many questions involved in its successful accomplishment.

It need not be added that the secret of his intentions, when disclosed by him, was speedily published all over the neighbourhood, and that it was not likely to diminish the hostile feeling already entertained towards him. The priests waxed fiercer in their opposition, and loudly charged him with heresy; hinting, at the same time, that "though he bare himself bold of the gentlemen there in that country, yet notwithstanding, shortly, he should be otherwise talked withal[2]." The Tyndales, it will be remembered, occupied a respectable position in the neighbourhood; his brother had

[1] *Foxe*, Edition of 1563.

[2] *Foxe*, Vol. v. p. 117.

very recently been appointed receiver of the crown-rents for the manor of Berkeley; Sir John Walsh was a person of distinction, whose anger was not to be lightly provoked; and it is evident also that Tyndale's arguments had made a profound impression upon several other gentlemen of influence in the vicinity. But, however powerful Tyndale's friends might be to protect him against any mere casual ebullition of clerical spite, they were quite powerless to shield him from any regularly organised proceedings by the great ecclesiastical authorities of the day. Tyndale himself was not insensible of his danger: he replied boldly to the priests that they might "remove him into any county in all England, giving him ten pounds a-year to live with, and binding him to no more but to teach children and to preach[1]."

But it was evident that matters were growing to a crisis; and Tyndale saw too clearly that it would be impossible for him to remain at Little Sodbury in peaceful prosecution of his great purpose. This purpose, however, he was determined to prosecute, whatever inconvenience or danger it might bring upon him; and it seemed to him not impossible that he might find in some other part of England that liberty which was no longer attainable at Sodbury. He resolved, therefore, to give up the post which he held in the family of Sir John Walsh. "'I perceive,' he said to his patron, 'that I shall not be suffered to tarry long here in this country, nor you shall be able to keep me out of their hands; and what displeasure you might have thereby is hard to know, for the which I should be right sorry.' So with the goodwill of his master he departed from him to London[2]."

Several considerations suggested London as the most suitable place to which Tyndale might repair in his difficulties. If he succeeded in finishing his translation, it was of course desirable that it should be printed, in order that it might be within the reach of those for whom it was intended; and the metropolis offered greater facilities for printing than any town

[1] *Foxe*, Vol. v. p. 117.

[2] *Foxe*, Edition of 1563.

in England. Moreover, the old Bishop of London, the ignorant Fitz-James, who had attempted to punish Colet, and who had rigorously prosecuted all heretics, was recently dead; and the vacant see was filled by a young accomplished prelate, a distinguished scholar, the friend of More and Erasmus, from whom, if from any one, Tyndale might expect sympathy and patronage. To London, therefore, Tyndale resolved to go, hoping to find in Tunstal a liberal patron under whose protection his work might be prosecuted. With the simple enthusiasm of a scholar, he immediately set about the translation into English of one of the orations of Isocrates, feeling confident that such a conspicuous proof of his knowledge of Greek would be the surest passport to the favour of a bishop who was famed for his love of learning and his liberality to scholars. Sir John Walsh, whose experience of the world enabled him more correctly to appreciate what was likely to secure the notice of the bishop, furnished him with a letter of introduction to his friend Sir Harry Guildford, Controller of the Royal Household, and high in favour with the Sovereign, whose recommendation therefore would probably be of more service to an unknown scholar than any possible evidences of unquestionable learning. Thus provided, and carrying with him, doubtless, his copy of Erasmus' Greek Testament and his manuscripts, Tyndale, after taking farewell of his relatives and his pupils, turned his back on the smiling vale of Berkeley, which he was never to behold again, and set out on his journey to London, full of those bright visions of hope which the name of the mighty metropolis has so often conjured up in the bosom of inexperienced youth.

CHAPTER III.

TYNDALE'S LIFE IN LONDON.

A.D. 1523—1524.

THE date of Tyndale's arrival in London can be ascertained with tolerable accuracy. His friend Humphrey Monmouth, when arrested for assisting him, gave a full and interesting account of his whole intercourse with the Reformer, to which we shall presently advert, and from which it is not difficult to determine within very narrow limits the precise time when Tyndale came to the metropolis. In his petition to Wolsey, written in May, 1528, Monmouth admits that "four years before" he had given money to Tyndale to help him to go abroad. The month of May, 1524, therefore, was the date of Tyndale's leaving London; and as, according to his own confession, he "abode in London almost a year," we can hardly be mistaken in believing that he arrived there in the month of July or August, 1523.

It was at a most eventful period that Tyndale came to London. The reign of Henry had hitherto been prosperous and popular; and the authority of his great minister Wolsey had lasted for ten years almost without a single murmur. Difficulties were now, however, beginning to make their appearance. The wars with France and Scotland, and the profuse extravagance of a young and pleasure-loving monarch, had emptied the exchequer, and had dissipated the enormous treasures accumulated by the penurious Henry VII. Wolsey disliked parliaments; but all other means of replenishing the royal coffers being exhausted, there was no resource but to summon one, and on the 15th of April, 1523, Parliament met

for the first time since December, 1516. The parliaments of Henry have been censured for their extreme servility; and they did unquestionably, on many occasions, exhibit an obsequiousness that is scarcely intelligible in free Englishmen; but there were points on which the members were too deeply interested to be servile. They lent their assistance with perfect composure, while Henry sacrificed to his necessities or his vengeance some of the noblest blood in England; but they were touched to the quick by the extravagance of the monarch. Already, in addition to the burden of military service which weighed heavily on them, they had paid vast sums by way of forced *loans* or *benevolences*, and they were by no means disposed tamely to endure any farther exactions.

But Henry's necessities were urgent, and neither he nor his minister was inclined to submit to be thwarted. Wolsey came down to the House of Commons and demanded from them a subsidy of eight hundred thousand pounds; a small sum perhaps in the eyes of modern readers, accustomed to the prodigious estimates of the present day, but whose magnitude may be understood from the fact that it was considered equivalent to a tax of four shillings in the pound on all the property in the kingdom, and was, indeed, supposed to exceed the entire currency then circulating in England. The demand was fiercely resisted; Sir Thomas More, who had been elected Speaker, attempted to calm the storm, and insinuated, in his bland and plausible manner, that "of duty men ought not to deny to pay four shillings in the pound;" but the Commons were not to be persuaded by any eloquence to such an unpleasant exercise of self-denial. A discussion of unprecedented bitterness and length ensued, lasting for sixteen days; and, in spite of the efforts of Wolsey and the court to cajole and to overawe the members, it was finally agreed to grant the King only half of what had been demanded, and that to be payable not at once, but in two years. Sentiments of discontent were loudly expressed on all sides; whispers of resistance were muttered; and affairs

wore such a menacing aspect, that Wolsey induced Henry to dissolve the recalcitrant assembly in August, and no parliament assembled again in England till the downfall of the arbitrary minister.

It was during the agitation of this famous debate that Tyndale arrived in London, when the arrogance of Wolsey was the universal theme of conversation, and the faults of the Cardinal were not likely to be extenuated or defended by men who considered themselves pillaged by his exorbitant demands. So far as has been ascertained, it was Tyndale's first introduction to the capital; he had hitherto known life only in the Universities and in the provinces; the pomp and splendour of courts, the intrigues and factions of statesmen, the pride and worldliness of the great rulers of the Church, these had been known to him only by report. This, therefore, was his first actual experience of the "practice of prelates;" and the sight was not lost upon him. He had already been disenchanted of that almost divine reverence with which he had in childhood been taught to regard the spiritual fathers and bishops of the Church; and his keen observing eyes marked and noted the strange sights passing around him, as food for reflection, and materials for future use. "I marked the course of the world," says he, in subsequently recounting the experience of this period of his life, "and heard our praters (I would say our preachers), how they boasted themselves and their high authority; and beheld the pomp of our prelates, and how busy they were, as they yet are, to set peace and unity in the world [said ironically, as will be seen presently], and saw things whereof I defer to speak at this time[1]."

It was, as has been said, a time when public indignation was strongly excited against Wolsey, when his whole past procedure would be severely criticised, and every indication of pomp and extravagance on his part would be repeated with triumphant glee. Tyndale would thus hear, on all hands, loud

[1] *Preface to the Pentateuch: Works*, Vol. I. p. 396.

complaints against those endless intrigues by which Wolsey had engaged England in almost constant war ever since Henry's accession to the throne. The capricious declaration of war with France, the vast treasure supplied to the German emperor, the whimsical conclusion of peace, the ridiculous parade of "The Field of the Cloth of Gold," the secret treaties—everything, in fact, that had for years cost the nation so much blood and money, was popularly ascribed, and not without very good reason, to the machinations of Wolsey. It was he, men said, who misled the king; and the affairs of England, it was complained, were administered by him and his brother prelates, without any regard to the real interests of the nation, but solely for the promotion of the interests of the Papal See, and the gratification of Wolsey's private piques. And the magnificence of the cardinal was too obtrusive to escape the sharpest animadversion. His pomp, in truth, exceeded all bounds, throwing even royalty into the shade; and his love of parade seems to have been marked by several elements of childish weakness, of which many strange stories were circulated in London, and were treasured up by Tyndale in a singularly retentive memory.

The reader may imagine, for example, the feeling of infinite scorn with which Tyndale, who had already begun to believe that the Pope was antichrist, would listen to the story current in London as to the manner in which Wolsey had caused the cardinal's hat which was sent him from Rome to be solemnly received. Some commonplace messenger had originally brought it to Westminster under his cloak without any ceremony, so Tyndale tells the story, but this unceremonious proceeding did not accord with the cardinal's ideas of propriety, so "he clothed the messenger in rich array, and sent him back to Dover again, and appointed the Bishop of Canterbury to meet him[1], and then another company of lords and gentles, I wot not how oft, ere it came to Westminster, where it was

[1] Wolsey, though only Archbishop of York, was as legate *a latere* superior to the primate, and took this opportunity of humbling him.

set on a cupboard, and tapers about, so that the greatest duke in the land must make courtesy thereto, yea, and to his empty seat, he being away[1]." Wolsey, doubtless, had several good points in his character, but at the time of Tyndale's residence in London, nothing was heard but the strongest condemnation of his intrigues and extravagance; and Tyndale, breathing this atmosphere for nearly a year, spoke and wrote of Wolsey at all times as "the falsest and vainest Cardinal that ever was."

If in such times of excitement any other topic could succeed in securing a share of public attention, it was what was considered the alarming spread of heretical opinions. The Reformation in Germany had grown into great dimensions; it was no longer a mere local dispute, but a great movement, the pulses of which were felt in every part of Western Europe. The works of Luther were widely circulated, and found everywhere admiring and sympathising readers. Two years before Tyndale's arrival in London, it was discovered that Luther's books had been imported in such numbers, that Wolsey issued a proclamation peremptorily requiring all who possessed any copies of the writings of that arch-heretic to deliver them up to the custody of the ecclesiastical authorities; but in spite of his prohibition we know that the books continued to be imported by the merchants who traded with the Low Countries. Henry himself, who loved theological controversy, and who prided himself on his orthodoxy, had entered the lists against the German heresiarch, and had been rewarded for his zeal by the title of "Defender of the Faith," still fondly cherished as the most honourable of all the distinctions of our sovereigns. The example of the king was, of course, emulated by the clergy; the pulpits resounded with fierce denunciations of the "detestable and damnable heresies" of that "child of the devil," who had ventured to resist the authority of the Pope, and to impugn the teaching of the Church; and the most learned of the prelates was busily occupied in composing an elaborate refutation of the doctrines

[1] Tyndale's *Practice of Prelates.*

of the German Reformer. Even in the midst of all the fierce excitement of the summer of 1523, the attention of Parliament was directed to the reported spread of Lutheranism in the University of Cambridge, and it was proposed to institute an episcopal visitation of the suspected colleges, which might have produced disastrous consequences, had not Wolsey unexpectedly intervened and forbidden the meditated inquisition[1]."

Such, therefore, was the position of public affairs when Tyndale came to London, expecting to find in the recently-appointed bishop of the diocese a sympathising scholar who would appreciate his learning, and would generously befriend and protect him. For some time, however, Tunstal was unapproachable; the pressure of more important business probably rendering it impossible to obtain any interview with him. Meantime Tyndale waited patiently for the opportunity which was, as he fondly imagined, to crown his hopes with success. He came to Sir Harry Guildford, the Master of the Horse, and presented the letter of introduction with which Sir John Walsh had furnished him; submitting to him at the same time that *Oration of Isocrates* which he had translated into English, and which Sir Harry, as a correspondent of Erasmus and a lover of learning, might be expected to appreciate at its true value as a credential of Tyndale's scholarship. Sir Harry received him courteously, promised to speak in his favour to Tunstal, and recommended that he should write to the bishop and obtain, if possible, an interview with him. Tyndale followed the advice thus given: he wrote his epistle, and took it to the episcopal residence,—old London House, in St. Paul's Churchyard, in all probability,—where he found in the bishop's employment a former acquaintance of his own, one William Hebilthwayte, to whom he entrusted the letter on which so much depended[2].

[1] See Demaus, *Life of Latimer*, p. 34.

[2] Of Hebilthwayte, who was possibly an old university acquaintance of Tyndale's, nothing is known; but Roger Ascham, writing from Augsburg in January, 1551,

Pending arrangements for his interview with Tunstal, Tyndale naturally enough sought employment as a preacher in London, and was allowed, or perhaps engaged, to preach in St. Dunstan's-in-the-West. His religious opinions were evidently still so far in accordance with what was deemed orthodox, that he was not debarred from preaching; and yet not improbably it was some subtle flavour of heresy in his sermons that especially gratified one hearer, who was destined to be of essential service to Tyndale, whom, indeed, we may justly regard as providentially raised up for his assistance in a critical emergency. Humphrey Monmouth, a wealthy cloth-merchant, who resided in the parish of All Hallows, Barking, at the extreme east of London, as St. Dunstan's was then in the extreme west, happened to be amongst the audience when Tyndale was preaching. It is not impossible that he may have known something of Tyndale's family, or may have had business connections with them; for he probably came from the county of Monmouth, close to Tyndale's birthplace; his brother was, we know, settled in Worcestershire, and Tyndale's relatives were engaged in the cloth manufacture in Gloucestershire.

As this worthy citizen is intimately associated with the life of Tyndale, the reader will be pleased to be introduced to him by no less a personage than Hugh Latimer, who was subsequently one of Monmouth's dearest friends. In one of his sermons on the Lord's Prayer, Latimer relates the following incident as characteristic of the generous merchant: "In expounding the Epistle to the Romans, Master Stafford[1], coming to that place where St. Paul saith that we shall 'overcome our enemy with well-doing, and so heap up hot coals upon his head,' brought in an example, saying that he knew

speaks of the Landgrave of Hesse as "lusty, well-favoured, something like Mr. *Hebilthwayte* in the face." This *may* have been Tyndale's friend. See Giles's *Ascham*, Vol. I. Part II. p. 243.

[1] One of Latimer's contemporaries at Cambridge, and a zealous Reformer. See Demaus, *Life of Latimer*, p. 62.

in London a great merchant, which merchant had a very poor neighbour, yet for all his poverty he loved him very well, and lent him money at his need, and let him to come to his table whensoever he would. It was even at that time when Dr. Colet was in trouble, and should have been burnt if God had not turned the king's heart to the contrary. Now the rich man began to be a Scripture-man, he began to smell the Gospel; the poor man was a papist still. It chanced on a time when the rich man talked of the Gospel, sitting at his table, where he reproved Popery, and such kind of things, the poor man being then present took a great displeasure against the rich man; insomuch that he would come no more to his house, he would borrow no more money of him as he was wont to do beforetimes; yea, and conceived such hatred and malice against him that he went and accused him before the bishops. Now the rich man, not knowing any such displeasure, offered many times to talk with him and set him at quiet; but it would not be: the poor man had such a stomach that he would not vouchsafe to speak with him; if he met the rich man in the street he would go out of his way. One time it happened that he met him in so narrow a street that he could not avoid but come near him; yet for all that, this poor man had such a stomach against the rich man, I say, that he was minded to go forward and not to speak with him. The rich man perceiving that, catcheth him by the hand, and asked him saying, 'Neighbour, what is come into your heart to take such displeasure with me? What have I done against you? Tell me, and I will be ready at all times to make you amends.' Finally, he spake so gently, so charitably, so lovingly and friendly, that it wrought in the poor man's heart, that by-and-by he fell down upon his knees, and asked him forgiveness. The rich man forgave him, and so took him again to his favour, and they loved as well as ever they did afore."

It may have been by mere accident that Monmouth was present on the first occasion in St. Dunstan's-in-the-West; but it must surely have been some more powerful motive that

induced him to return to that church from his own home in the other extremity of London. Poor, and savouring of Lutheranism, Tyndale had probably excited the sympathy of the generous merchant who himself had begun "to be a Scripture-man," and whose special pleasure it was to assist needy scholars. But we shall allow him to tell the story in his own words:—

"Upon four years and a half past and more," he writes to Wolsey, in May, 1528, "I heard the foresaid Sir William[1] preach two or three sermons at St. Dunstan's-in-the-West in London; and after that I chanced to meet with him, and with communication I examined him, what living he had. He said he had none at all; but he trusted to be with my Lord of London in his service; and, therefore, I had the better fantasy to him. And afterwards he went to my lord, and spake to him as he told me, and my lord of London answered him that he had chaplains enough, and he said to him that he would have no more at that time."

But the narrative of Tyndale's abortive interview with Tunstal must not be dismissed thus briefly. For some time Tyndale had looked forward to it as the great hope of his life. It seemed to him that, under the protection of a prelate who loved learning, he might enjoy the peace and leisure without which it appeared impossible that his great design could ever be successfully accomplished. So Tyndale thought; but God had ordained that not in the learned leisure of a palace, but amid the dangers and privation of exile should the English Bible be produced. Other qualifications were necessary to make him a worthy translator of Holy Scripture than mere grammatical scholarship; qualifications little likely to be acquired in palaces; to be learned rather in that stern school of injury and suffering through which the writers of the New Testament themselves had passed. These qualifications Tyndale as yet wanted, and they were not to be acquired in the palace of the Bishop of London. "God saw that I was beguiled," he confesses, in subsequently looking back upon the

[1] *Sir* was the common designation of a priest, just as *reverend* is now.

transaction, "and that that counsel was not the next [nearest] way to my purpose; and, therefore, He gat me no favour in my lord's sight." At the time he bitterly felt what seemed to be the total disappointment of all his hopes; but he afterwards learnt to trace in what appeared a misfortune the fatherly guidance of God; and this very disappointment, which compelled him to seek his whole comfort in the Word of God, tended to qualify him for the worthy performance of his great work.

At last the long-anticipated interview took place, with such results as any one but an enthusiast like Tyndale might have foreseen. Tunstal, though an accomplished scholar, "a man, doubtless, out of comparison[1]," according to Sir Thomas More, was at the same time a cautious and courtly prelate, little likely to sympathise with the noble enthusiasm of the scholar who stood before him. Tunstal was a man of the world, a man born to shine in courts, "right meet, and convenient," as Warham assured Wolsey, "to entertain ambassadors and other noble strangers at that notable and honourable city [London], in the absence of the king's most noble grace[2]."

Upon this reserved and dignified prelate Tyndale was almost certain to make an unfavourable impression. He was, according to his own confession, "evil-favoured in this world, and without grace in the sight of men, speechless and rude, dull and slow-witted[3]." It is evident that at the first glance the bishop and the scholar mutually distrusted each other. Tunstal felt that he might be compromised by the incaution of the youthful enthusiast; and Tyndale was repelled by the cold and silent manner of the bishop, whom he describes as a "still Saturn, that so seldom speaketh, but walketh up and down all day musing, a ducking hypocrite made to dissemble[4]." Tunstal's courtesy was reserved for ambassadors and for scholars

[1] More's *Utopia*. Ralph Robinson's translation.
[2] Hook's *Archbishops of Canterbury*, Vol. VI. p. 213.
[3] See his letter to Fryth, *infra*.
[4] *Practice of Prelates*: Tyndale's *Works*, Vol. II. p. 337.

who had secured the patronage of kings; for the unknown scholar who stood disconcerted before him, with his translation of *Isocrates* in his hand, and proposals for an English Bible on his lips, he had nothing but that chilling official reserve, which, more even than opposition, crushes the generous enthusiasm of youth.

With difficulty Tyndale explained the errand on which he had come; he produced what he had brought with him as a proof of his scholarship; he spoke of the greater design which he hoped to accomplish in London; he requested the bishop's patronage, that he might have the means of subsistence during the performance of his work. But Tunstal had no wish for any further connection with Tyndale. He acknowledged, indeed, the scholarship of the new candidate for his patronage; but he declined that personal protection which Tyndale had solicited. "My lord answered me," says Tyndale, "his house was full; he had more than he could well find [provide for]; and advised me to seek in London, where, he said, I could not lack a service[1]." And so they parted, never to meet again. Tunstal seems speedily to have lost all recollection of the interview; but Tyndale never forgot the cold ungenerous reception which had well-nigh broken his heart.

It has been doubted whether at this interview Tyndale made any allusion to his intention of translating the Holy Scriptures into English; and assuredly the mention of such a design would by no means tend to propitiate Tunstal's favour. But on the whole it seems probable that Tyndale did communicate his intention to Tunstal. There was no reason for bringing his translation of *Isocrates* to London except as evidence of his ability to accomplish a similar work; and though the translation of any part of Holy Scripture into the English tongue had been forbidden to be undertaken by any man *of his own authority*, it was expressly provided that the "ordinary of the place" might approve and sanction such a translation; and it was, therefore, not altogether absurd to

[1] *Preface to the Pentateuch*: *Works*, Vol. I. p. 396.

hope that Tunstal might be induced to give this sanction[1]. Tyndale's own words, moreover, seem to make it quite clear that he spoke of this work to Tunstal, for he says he intended to have made his translation "in the Bishop of London's house[2];" from which it seems natural to infer that he had mentioned his intention to Tunstal; for he could never have dreamed of accomplishing it without his consent and knowledge. Disappointed in his hopes of assistance from the Bishop of London, he had still one friend in the metropolis who was willing and ready to help him.

"The priest came to me again," to resume Monmouth's interesting memoir, "and besought me to help him; and so I took him into my house half-a-year; and there he lived like a good priest as methought. He studied most part of the day and of the night at his book; and he would eat but sodden meat by his good will, and drink but small single beer. I never saw him wear linen about him in the space he was with me [always "odious in woollen"]. I did promise him ten pounds sterling, to pray for my father and mother their souls, and all Christian souls. I did pay it him when he made his exchange to Hamburg; and afterwards he got of some other men ten pounds sterling more, the which he left with me. . . . The foresaid Sir William left me an English book called *Enchiridion*, the which book the Abbess of Denneye [in Cambridgeshire] desired it of me, and I lent it to her. Another book I had of the same copy[3]; a friar of Greenwich desired it of me, and I gave it him[4]. I think my lord of Rochester hath it [*i.e.* that Fisher had seized it.] . . . I have showed the book called the *Enchiridion* to Mr. Doctor Watson [one of Henry's chaplains], and to Mr. Doctor Slockhouse, pastor of Lavenham in Suffolk, and to many other that never

[1] See the Act of Convocation in Wilkins, Vol. III. p. 317.

[2] *Preface to the Pentateuch: Works*, Vol. I. p. 394.

[3] This book is mentioned in such a way as to suggest that it was printed, but of this there is no proof; nor, indeed, all things considered, does it seem probable.

[4] Possibly this was either Roye or Jerome, who were subsequently associated with Tyndale on the Continent.

found fault in him to my knowledge, and to the father confessor of Sion [religious house on the Thames above Brentford], and to Mr. Martin, priest and parson of Totingbeke. . . . When I heard my lord of London preach at Paul's Cross that Sir William Tyndale had translated the New Testament in English, and [that it] was naughtily translated, that was the first time that ever I suspected or knew any evil by him. And shortly after, all the letters and treatises that he sent me, with divers copies of books that my servant did write, and the sermons that the priest did make at St. Dunstan's, I did burn them in my house. He that did write them did see it; I did burn them for fear of the translator more than for any ill that I knew by [of] them[1]."

We have given at full length the parts of Monmouth's narrative that refer to Tyndale and his proceedings during his residence in London; for after the conjectures and uncertainties which have constituted so large a portion of his biography up to this point, it is impossible to over-estimate the value of the information which the narrative contains. Monmouth's letter furnishes us with an authentic sketch of Tyndale's habits and manner of life, drawn by the hand of the man who knew him best. And the picture thus sketched is that of a scholar of simple tastes and ardent love of learning, one who, unfettered by any vow, practised of his own accord that abnegation of the pleasures of life, which was, or at least was supposed to be, practised in the cloister as a wonderful attainment in religious perfection. The picture, moreover, though drawn by a loving hand, is not exaggerated through the influence of flattering affection; for Sir Thomas More, a bitter enemy, confirms it in all essential particulars; while inveighing fiercely against Tyndale's doctrines, he admits that "before he went over the sea he was well-known for a man of right good living, studious and well-learned in Scripture, and looked and preached holily." His enemies never attempted to deny his great learning; and

[1] *Petition of Humphrey Monmouth to Wolsey*, Harleian MSS. p. 425; printed by Strype, with occasional errors, as usual.

no imputation was ever made against the rectitude of his moral character.

It does not appear that Tyndale procured that "service" in London, which Tunstal had assured him a man of his ability would have no difficulty in finding; at least, there is no record of his officiating as a preacher elsewhere than in the church of St. Dunstan's. Probably, indeed, the "praying for the souls of the father and mother of Humphrey Monmouth," which formed the ostensible ground of connection between him and his generous patron, was performed in the church of the parish where the worthy merchant resided: and it seems also to be implied in the words of Monmouth's narrative, that Tyndale continued, at least for a time, to preach in St. Dunstan's, carefully writing out his sermons, with the anxiety of one who wished to discharge his duty well. These, however, seem to have been the whole of Tyndale's official engagements in the metropolis. London needed the labours of so well qualified a teacher; but a stranger, on whom the bishop had looked with suspicion, was little likely to find encouragement there. Tyndale was no adept in the arts of popularity, and London was not likely to recognise in the quiet austere-looking priest, hurrying along Fleet Street to St. Dunstan's, the man whose words were to be associated for centuries with all that is noblest in the spiritual life of England.

Whatever discouragement he might meet with elsewhere, he was cordially welcomed under the hospitable roof of the wealthy cloth-merchant; and, indeed, all things considered, it may be doubted whether even Tunstal's palace would have afforded greater advantages than were to be enjoyed in the home of Humphrey Monmouth. For Monmouth was no ordinary man, no mere common-place trafficker, whose ideas never rose beyond the state of the market. He occupied a position of high respectability, and was afterwards alderman and sheriff. He had travelled and seen the world to an extent quite unusual in those days; he had not only gone to Rome, then the ordinary limit even of the most adventurous travellers,

but had also visited Jerusalem. His patronage of men of letters was marked by a generous liberality almost certainly unequalled in England at that time. His liberality to Tyndale we have already seen: he provided him at once with ten pounds a year, equal, probably, to a hundred pounds in our day, besides receiving him to reside in his house. This, however, was only one out of many similar instances of generosity. "I have given more exhibitions to scholars," he declares in his petition, "in my days than to that priest; Mr. Doctor Royston, chaplain to my lord of London, hath cost me more than forty or fifty pounds sterling [more than five hundred pounds of our money], and also Mr. Doctor Wooderall, Provincial of Friars Austines, hath cost me as much or more; Mr. Doctor Watson, chaplain to the king's good grace, hath cost me somewhat; and somewhat I have given to the scholars at his request, and to divers priests and friars." Even this list, it may be assumed, by no means exhausts his benefactions to men of learning: for it must be remembered that when he wrote his petition, he was under arrest for assisting Tyndale and others condemned as heretics, and he is, therefore, cautious not to mention any of his protégés who might be looked upon by the authorities as tainted with the infection of heresy.

At Monmouth's table Tyndale would be sure to meet many of the most learned men in London; for priests of all grades, friars of all orders, priors and abbesses in numbers, were amongst the familiar friends of the worthy merchant. Perhaps Tyndale may have had to fight over again some of the same battles which he had fought with the priests at the table of Sir John Walsh; more probably he would find the enlightened company that assembled around Monmouth's board ready to join with him in bewailing the lamentable corruptions that prevailed in the Church, and eagerly longing for some extensive reform of abuses that were becoming intolerable. It is quite certain that Monmouth himself was considerably influenced by the opinions of Luther. He still, apparently,

believed in purgatory and prayers for the dead, as did also Tyndale[1]; but he bought and studied the works of Luther; and he was subsequently charged with eating flesh in Lent, with speaking disrespectfully of the pardons granted by the Pope and the bishops, and with denying the utility of pilgrimages and offerings before the images of the saints: all the customary indications, in fact, of one who adhered to what was then styled the "detestable sect of the Lutherans."

It was in Monmouth's house, beyond a doubt, that Tyndale heard most of that secret history of the transactions of Henry's reign, which he afterwards repeated in his *Practice of Prelates;* it was here, unquestionably, that he met with many of those men who were subsequently associated with him in his labours on the Continent; and it was here also that he would first have an opportunity of perusing those writings of Luther which had already withdrawn half of Germany from its obedience to the Papal See. The great work of Luther, and the wonderful progress of the Reformation in Germany, Switzerland, and France, had been but vaguely known to him as to most Englishmen before; but at the table of a merchant who traded with those countries, and where native merchants were frequently to be met, he would hear all the details narrated with the accuracy and impressiveness that belong only to eye-witnesses.

All this was not, of course, inoperative upon Tyndale. Hitherto, he seems to have looked up to Erasmus as the great light and guide of the age, and the true reformer of religion; now he heard of a greater Reformer, whose words of more impressive eloquence, and, still more, whose conduct of more resolule determination, had achieved what Erasmus had rather recommended than attempted. Tyndale was too independent to be the mere echo or imitator of any one, however illustrious; but there can be no question that from this time onwards

[1] It has been suggested that the "praying for the souls" spoken of in the petition was a mere form of speech not to be interpreted strictly; but surely this is to prove a man orthodox at the expense of his honesty.

Luther occupied the highest place in his esteem, and exercised very considerable influence over his opinions.

To this period of Tyndale's life also may be, with little hesitation, referred his intercourse with one who was afterwards for some time the dearest of his earthly friends, John Fryth. For the tradition which represents the two martyrs as having been in residence together in Cambridge, may be set aside as having neither evidence nor probability in its favour. Fryth certainly did not enter Cambridge till the commencement of 1522, by which time it is agreed on all hands that Tyndale must have left the University for Little Sodbury. It was in London, probably, therefore, that Fryth met Tyndale, and heard from him those words of persuasiveness and power which first implanted "in his heart the seed of the Gospel and sincere godliness." It must have been in London also that those conferences took place between them, in which they discoursed of the necessity for Scripture being "turned into the vulgar speech, that the poor people might also read and see the simple, plain word of God." Fryth was considerably younger than Tyndale, but there was something in his earnestness and love of learning which at once secured Tyndale's affection; and to the close of Fryth's brief career Tyndale never wavered in his attachment to his "dear son in the faith."

Amid these various occupations in London, Tyndale did not lose sight of the great purpose for which he had come to the metropolis, and to which he felt impelled as the grand work of his life. No question would be more earnestly weighed in his own mind, or more eagerly discussed with the sympathising visitors at Monmouth's table, than the question whether it was likely that the consent of the Authorities of the Church could be obtained to the issuing of a translation of the Word of God in the English language. *Practically*, the use of the Word of God in their native tongue was forbidden to the people; although *theoretically*, and according to the strict letter of the law, what was forbidden was the reading of any translation

of Holy Scripture "until the said translation be approved by the ordinary of the place, or, if the case so require, by the council provincial[1]." Men were not absolutely forbidden to translate Holy Scripture; they were forbidden to translate it of *their own authority;* and a hope was thus apparently held out of the possibility of some translation being produced under the sanction of the bishops. This was, however, only a vain delusive promise. More than a century had passed since the enactment of this Constitution[2]; the bishops had been unceasing and unrelenting in their severity towards all who dared to read the Word of God in the version of Wycliffe; but they had taken no steps whatever for supplying the imperfections of that version by the production of a better. The only existing version was rigorously prohibited under pain of "the greater excommunication;" no version which men might freely read was as yet issued.

Tunstal had evidently given Tyndale no encouragement to proceed in his work; and the momentous question was therefore to be decided, whether there was any hope or any possibility of his obtaining that episcopal approbation without which his translation could neither be printed nor read, without exposing all concerned to the penalties of the law. Such a question involved far too serious issues to be speedily or lightly determined. Long and earnestly, we may be sure, it was canvassed. The possibility of Tunstal's relenting; the hope of Convocation seriously addressing itself to the remedy of those abuses in the Church which it had so often bewailed; the likelihood of Wolsey putting into execution any of the reforms which he meditated, and overriding the opposition of the bishops by the exercise of his plenary authority as legate; the fond expectation that some prelate more liberal than Tunstal might be found who would grant the necessary approbation for his work; all these contingencies, we may be sure, were carefully weighed; but at the last Tyndale sorrowfully "understood not only that there was no room

[1] Wilkins, Vol. III. p. 317.

[2] Passed at Oxford in 1408.

in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but, also, that there was no place to do it in all England[1]."

What then was to be done? Was he to abandon his cherished undertaking as impracticable, and patiently wait in hope of better times? Such might have been the solution of the difficulty that he would have adopted in Little Sodbury; but in Monmouth's house, surrounded by men to whom the state of the Continent was familiarly known, another solution was suggested to him. It was clearly impossible to translate the New Testament in England; but there was no difficulty in translating it abroad, in some of those countries where the Reformation had established itself. Printers abounded on the Continent, who would cheerfully undertake to print the work if there was any reasonable prospect of being reimbursed for their labour; and Monmouth would take a pleasure in pointing out the endless expedients, by which the energy of mercantile enterprise might be able to import the work into England with very little risk of its being discovered by the authorities. Money alone was wanting; but for this the liberality of Monmouth might be depended upon: and there were other friends, whose names unfortunately are unknown, who gave Tyndale the considerable sum of ten pounds, almost enough in those days to defray the expense of printing an edition of the New Testament.

To Tyndale, who was an intense patriot, the thought of thus exiling himself from his native land would bring a load of distress, which nothing but his fixed determination to accomplish the great purpose of his life could have enabled him to sustain. No other way, however, seemed open; if he was to accomplish that work to which he felt that God had called him, if by his instrumentality England was to receive what he believed to be the greatest blessing that could be bestowed upon it, he must be ready to sacrifice the endearments of home and native land, and to face the unknown dangers of exile in a foreign country. The trial was great; but Tyndale

[1] *Preface to the Pentateuch: Works*, Vol. I. p. 396.

was strengthened to bear it. He recognised the guidance of Providence, and though the way was rough, he prepared to follow it. Whatever information he required for the direction of his journey his host was well able to supply, for his trade lay chiefly with those very countries towards which Tyndale was about to proceed. For a man of Tyndale's simple habits few preparations were necessary. Most of his books he left with Monmouth; but his copy of Erasmus' New Testament, and possibly some crude first sketches of his translation, he carried with him; and somewhere about the month of May, 1524, he sailed to Hamburg, never to set foot on his native land again.

Scarcely a year before, he had come up to London bright with anticipations of success, hoping to find in the patronage of a learned and liberal prelate that protection which had been denied him in a remote and less enlightened diocese. All his anticipations had been cruelly disappointed, and now in sorrow and sadness he was sailing forth on the untried dangers of solitude and exile. Still his faith sustained him, and even hope did not desert him, for it seems clear that he left his residence with Monmouth in the expectation of returning again in peace. Blessed was the Providence that concealed from him the future; hope seemed to him to brighten the dark cloud that hovered over him. Had he been able to read the future that awaited him, and which he subsequently so pathetically bewailed, the "poverty, the long exile from his own native land, the bitter absence from his friends, the hunger, the thirst, the cold, the great danger wherewith he was everywhere compassed, the innumerable other hard and sharp fightings which he had to endure;" had he been able to foresee all this, doubtless his gentle and loving soul would have been melted with the spectacle; and yet the stout heart would have gone forward, "hoping with his labours to do honour to God, true service to his Prince, and pleasure to his Commons[1]."

[1] Letter of Vaughan to Henry VIII: Cotton MSS. Titus.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM TYNDALE'S ARRIVAL IN HAMBURG TO THE PRINTING OF THE FIRST ENGLISH NEW TESTAMENT.

A.D. 1524—1526.

HAMBURG was, in Tyndale's time, as now, a bustling city, wholly immersed in trade, one of the chief commercial entrepôts of Germany. Even here, however, the influence of that mighty movement which Luther had inaugurated had made itself felt. The clergy were numerous, and had largely shared in the wealth of the city; the Church could reckon, in Hamburg, a hundred and twenty secular priests, besides a small army of members of the religious orders; and, with the customary insolence of the ecclesiastical corporations of that day, they had demanded that their property should be exempted from the heavy burdens which long wars had brought upon the city. The day of retribution, however, at length arrived; men would no longer endure the insolence and immorality of the clergy; the immunities of the Church were no longer respected; the traffic in indulgences was publicly denounced; and, in spite of the fierce opposition of the priests, liberty was accorded to the followers of Luther to preach their opinions. Thus Tyndale would see around him in his new abode the actual operation of that great religious movement, for which long years of preparation were still needed in his native land.

But it was not merely to be a spectator of the progress of the Reformation in Germany that Tyndale had crossed the sea: he had come to Hamburg for a specific purpose, and he doubtless lost no time in taking the necessary steps for the

accomplishment of his great work. His movements, however, are for some time involved in obscurity; the details that have been preserved are few, and sometimes indefinite; and the uncertainty has been increased by the theorising of modern writers who, in defence of their own hypotheses, have been led to discredit the contemporary sources of information that have come down to us.

It was, as we have seen from Monmouth's petition, about the month of May, 1524, that Tyndale left London for Hamburg;[1] "and within a year," the narrative continues, "he sent for his ten pounds [which some friends in London had given him] to me *from Hamburg;* and thither I sent it to him by one Hans Collenbek, as I remember is his name, a merchant of the Stilyarde."[2] Somewhat earlier therefore than May, and probably in April, 1525, Tyndale was again in Hamburg; and in the autumn of that year, as will subsequently be shown, he was in Cologne. These may be considered as fixed and indisputable points in Tyndale's life at this period; how or where the intervening months were spent are questions on which considerable difference of opinion has hitherto prevailed.

Obviously, the first question that suggests itself to the attentive reader of Monmouth's narrative is this,—Did Tyndale remain in Hamburg from May, 1524, to April, 1525, or did he spend the interval elsewhere? Monmouth's declaration is quite compatible with either alternative: and the question must be decided by other evidence. The contemporaries of Tyndale, all, without one dissentient voice, assert that he did *not* remain at Hamburg; but the prevalent opinion among recent writers seems to lean to the contrary alternative. In such a conflict between the assertions of contemporary

[1] Anderson in his *Annals*, Vol. I. p. 45, notwithstanding Monmouth's narrative, speaks of Tyndale as sailing to Hamburg in January, a month when the Elbe is usually frozen over and Hamburg inaccessible by sea. But this and many other mistakes in dates are inevitable results of Anderson's one grand mistake in the date of the first discovery of New Testaments at Oxford, which he places in 1526 instead of 1528.

[2] Harleian MSS., as before.

authorities and the inferences of modern historians, there can be little doubt on which side the truth is likely to be found. And in the present instance the contemporary evidence is so strong, that there need be no hesitation in rejecting the theories which have in recent times been advanced against it. One consideration alone may suffice to dissipate for ever the hypothesis that Tyndale spent the whole of the first year of his exile in Hamburg. He had left England for the sole purpose of preparing for the press a translation of the New Testament; and, indeed, it is asserted by those who maintain that he remained in Hamburg, that he printed the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark in that city before April 1525. Now, though Hamburg was a wealthy and enterprising commercial town, *it did not as yet possess a single printer.* Printing does not appear to have been introduced into that money-making community till after Tyndale's martyrdom; and in these circumstances, the theory that he spent a whole year in a place where he could not possibly accomplish the work for which he had left his home, may be dismissed as untenable.[1]

But if Tyndale did not remain at Hamburg, where, it will be asked, did he go? His contemporaries, without a single exception, reply that he went to *Wittemberg* to see Luther; and as modern writers have denied this, it will not be superfluous briefly to exhibit some specimens of the concurrent testimony of the older authorities.

Among the articles of accusation against Monmouth in 1528 was the following: "Thou wert privy and of counsel that the said Sir William Hutchin, otherwise called Tyndale, and friar

[1] This is not the place to inquire into the early history of printing in Hamburg; and fortunately it is unnecessary to devote much time to a subject which Dr. Maitland has already treated with his usual ability. His Essay on this point, in connection with the treatise *De Verâ Obedientiâ*, which is said to have been printed at Hamburg in 1536, ought long ago to have given the *coup de grâce* to the theory that Tyndale spent a year in a city without a printer, and that too when he had come abroad for no other reason but to print. See Maitland's *Essays on the Reformation*, p. 371, etc.

Roye, or either of them, *went into Almayne* [Germany], *to Luther, there to study and learn his sect*;" and Monmouth in his defence does not deny the charge, as he certainly would have done had it been false; for it was no small fault in the eyes of his accusers.

Sir Thomas More, in his *Dialogue*, written chiefly against Tyndale, asserts that "Tyndale as soon as he got him hence, *got him to Luther* straight;"[1] that "at the time of his translation of the New Testament *Tyndale was with Luther at Wittemberg*, and the confederacy between him and Luther was well known";[2] and still further, Tyndale having denied that he was *confederate* with Luther, Sir Thomas in his *Confutation* no longer accuses him of confederacy, but still repeats the assertion that he was with Luther, at the time when he was translating the New Testament.[3]

Cochloeus, whose hostility caused Tyndale to suspend the printing of his translation at Cologne, speaks of Tyndale and Roye as "two English apostates, *who had been sometime at Wittemberg*";[4] and the truth of this assertion Cochloeus had abundant means of ascertaining from those who were printing Tyndale's work.

Finally, John Foxe concurs in asserting that "on his first departing out of the realm, Tyndale took his journey into the further parts of Germany, as into Saxony, where *he had conference with Luther* and other learned men in those quarters."[5]

Such is the testimony of Tyndale's contemporaries. They had no theory to support; they merely repeated what they knew, or what was commonly believed at the time; and with one voice they maintain that Tyndale went to Wittemberg to

[1] *Dialogue*, p. 283. Edition of 1557.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 221.

[3] Sir Thomas More's *Confutation: Works*, pp. 419, etc.

[4] Cochloeus, *Commentarii de actis et scriptis M. Lutheri*, Mentz, 1549, p. 132; the passage is given in full subsequently. He repeats the statement in his treatise, *An expediat laicis legere Novum Testamentum*: A. 6.

[5] Foxe: *Works*, Vol. v. p. 119.

see Luther. No other theory has the slightest support from any contemporary writer: and evidence such as this cannot be set aside except on the clearest and most convincing demonstration of its falsehood. The objections alleged against it by modern writers are, however, extremely feeble, and scarcely merit any serious refutation.

In the main, two objections have been adduced against that journey to Wittemberg which all contemporaries have asserted. In the first place, it has been alleged that Tyndale himself denies that he ever was with Luther; and this would certainly be conclusive, if only it could be proved. Tyndale's words have in this instance, however, been misunderstood, as a careful examination of the whole context will show. Sir Thomas More, in the passage already cited from his *Dialogue*, declares, "at the time of this translation, Hutchins was with Luther in Wittemberg, and set certain glosses in the margin, [of the first quarto New Testament,] framed for the setting forth of the ungracious sect." "By St. John, quoth your friend, [the imaginary interlocutor in the *Dialogue*,] if that be true that Hutchins were at the time with Luther, it is a plain token that he wrought somewhat after his counsel, and was willing to help his matters forward." Sir Thomas continues, "As touching the *confederacy* between Luther and him [it] is a thing well known and plainly confessed by such as have been taken and convicted here of heresy." To all this passage Tyndale replies curtly and emphatically: "When he saith Tyndale was *confederate* with Luther, that is not truth."[1] Now, it seems sufficiently obvious that these words of Tyndale do not at all imply a denial of the whole of More's statement. Tyndale denies most emphatically that he was "confederate with Luther," or acting in common with him on a mutual understanding; but that he was at Wittemberg, or that he had seen and conversed with Luther, he does not deny, but rather seems implicitly to admit. That this is the true import of Tyndale's assertion

[1] *Answer to Sir Thomas More: Works*, Vol. III. p. 147.

seems placed beyond doubt by the fact that Sir Thomas More in his subsequent *Confutation* again repeats his statement that Tyndale was with Luther; and perhaps even more strongly by the fact that Foxe, who edited that very work in which the disputed words occur, maintains, notwithstanding, that Tyndale on leaving England went to Luther.

In the argument just considered it may be admitted that there is some show of reason; but this can hardly be conceded to the other objection which has been in recent times alleged against the universal testimony of all Tyndale's contemporaries. It has actually been asserted that during the debated period, Luther was so engrossed in his own labours that he could not have had a moment to spare for conversing with any stranger; and that, moreover, he was so excited on the great sacramental controversy which had just sprung up, that he would not have permitted the approach of any one who did not share his opinions. The great German Reformer was, indeed, busily occupied in what was one of the most eventful years of the Reformation; and having, as he himself used to say, "a pope in his belly," he may have been somewhat sharp in his treatment of opponents; but such arguments, besides involving a gross imputation upon so noble a soul, would not, even if true, prove that Tyndale did not go to Wittemberg. Wittemberg was, in fact, the head-quarters of the new movement that was agitating all Europe: it was, as Duke George of Saxony styled it, "the common asylum of all apostates;" every man, in every country, who longed for some reformation of religion, and whose opinions rendered him obnoxious to the ecclesiastical authorities, flocked to Wittemberg; and for them all the German Reformer had a hearty welcome; after his marriage his house was open to their visits, and at all times he was easy enough of access. Moreover, there is no ground whatever for believing that at this period Tyndale's views on the Sacrament differed from Luther's, or even that he had at all departed from the ordinary teaching of the Church on this point; indeed, Sir Thomas

More repeatedly asserts—and no denial was ever offered of his assertions—that at first Tyndale did adopt the Lutheran doctrine of the Sacrament.

The truth is, that the whole of this modern theory of Tyndale's movements, constructed, as we have seen, in direct opposition to all contemporary authority, has sprung from a narrow and ill-grounded fear, that Tyndale's reputation would be injured by the admission of his having been at Wittemberg with Luther. The admirers of our great English translator have been justly indignant at the ignorant misrepresentations which have sometimes treated him as a mere echo and parasite of his German contemporary; and, in their zeal to maintain their hero's originality, they have discarded ancient authority, and have denied that the two Reformers ever met. The motive for such a defence may be praiseworthy, but its wisdom is questionable. To maintain, in defiance of all contemporary evidence, that Tyndale remained for a year in a bustling commercial town where there were no printers, where he would be disturbed by bitter quarrels, and deprived of all opportunities of consulting books or conferring with friends that might have aided him in his work,—this is surely a strange method of vindicating Tyndale; this is an attempt to defend his originality at the cost of his good sense.

Rejecting, therefore, the theories of modern historians, we accept implicitly the testimony of contemporary authors, and believe that Tyndale, shortly after his arrival in Hamburg, proceeded at once to Wittemberg. Of the details and incidents of the journey, and the impressions it made on Tyndale's mind, we have no record, and it is useless to indulge in speculations. To a man like Tyndale, with a keen eye, and a mind open to conviction, and capable of reflection, such a journey must, as a matter of course, have been an eventful one, contributing materially to form and develop his own religious opinions, and cheering his heart after his sad farewell to his native land. In England, he had prayed and longed for a Reformation which seemed distant, and perhaps impossible;

but as he journeyed to Wittemberg he would see the Reformation in successful progress. Indulgences were no longer vended in places of public resort; convents were abandoned by their inmates, who had relinquished vows that secluded them in idleness, and had betaken themselves to pious and useful occupations; images were no more reverenced; the Mass, with its accompanying rites, was giving place to the Lord's Supper; the people were freely permitted to read the Word of God in their native tongue, and exhibited the deepest interest in the theological questions that were debated around them; and even amongst those who were opposed to the doctrines of Luther there was a firm determination to obtain from the Roman See some redress of the intolerable grievances under which the German nation had for ages been groaning. In all this there was much to encourage Tyndale in the prosecution of his great work; but most of all would he be encouraged by that intercourse with Luther, which, under whatever difficulties in that year of troubles, we still suppose, in accordance with the statements of contemporary authorities, that he in some measure enjoyed. For Tyndale thus to come into contact with the strong, joyous faith of Luther, to hear his lion-voice echoing through the crowded University Church of Wittemberg, or to listen to his wonderful "table-talk," as he sipped his beer in friendly, social intercourse, would be to have his whole soul inspired with courage, bravely to do whatever duty God had called him to, and to learn to repose with implicit confidence in the protection of the Divine Master whom he served. Tyndale would have too much good sense not to avail himself of any advice which Luther's experience could suggest for the successful accomplishment of his work; and safe at last from any danger of molestation, he settled down in Wittemberg to the steady prosecution of his long-contemplated task.

To the modern scholar, amply provided with an embarrassing riches of Greek scholastic apparatus, in the shape of grammars, lexicons, synopses, and collations, the undertaking

of Tyndale probably does not appear to be one of any superlative difficulty. But in Tyndale's days the scholar had no such helps as those which three centuries of study have accumulated around us. Grammars and lexicons were as yet few and meagre, mainly the works of Italian scholars, and somewhat expensive and difficult to be procured. The question of *texts*, and *codices*, and *various readings*, so interesting to the Biblical student of the present day, had not then begun to attract attention. Tyndale had, practically, no choice of a text; there is no reason to believe that he had access to any manuscripts; there is no trace in his first translation of any direct influence exerted by the Complutensian Polyglot; no Greek Testament was in reality accessible to him, except that of Erasmus, which had been originally printed in 1516, and of which a second edition appeared in 1519, and a third in 1522. From this third edition of Erasmus it can be demonstrated that Tyndale made his English version.[1]

That he would diligently avail himself of any assistance which Luther or Melanchthon could afford, may be taken for granted; in truth, however, he cannot have received any material assistance from such quarters. He was himself a good Greek scholar, quite as good, in all probability, as Luther; but while he understood German,[2] none of the learned men of Wittemberg understood English, so that their help must have been of very slight importance, and such as in no way to affect Tyndale's originality. He might, indeed, be able to

[1] Tyndale's translation contains the famous controverted passage about the *three* witnesses in the First Epistle of St. John. Now this did not occur in Erasmus' Testament till the edition of 1522, when it was inserted from the Complutensian Polyglot.

[2] *Demonstration* of this will be given subsequently; meantime, I refer to the authority of Cochloeus, who speaks of Tyndale and Roye as "two apostates from England, *who learned the German language at Wittemberg:*" Cochloeus, *An expediat laicis legere Novum Testamentum:* signature A. 6. It may be necessary here to state that Cochloeus resided in Cologne when Tyndale was there in 1525, that he was a daily visitor in the printing-office where Tyndale's book was printing, and therefore could not well be mistaken in what he here alleges. See *infra*, pp. 114, etc.

consult them on the correct meaning of difficult or disputed passages; but in the actual translation of the New Testament into the English language he was thrown entirely upon his own resources; for, as he reminds his readers in the noble epistle subjoined to his first octavo New Testament, he "had no man to counterfeit [imitate], neither was helped with English of any that had interpreted the same, or such like thing in the Scripture beforetime." He was of course aware of the existence of Wycliffe's version; but this, as a bald translation from the Vulgate into obsolete English, could not be of any assistance (even if he had possessed a copy) to one who was endeavouring "singly and faithfully, so far forth as God had given him the gift of knowledge and understanding," to render the New Testament from its original Greek into "proper English."

Of the ability and learning with which his work was accomplished we shall subsequently have to treat; meantime, it must be remembered that the task was not performed without great labour, so that his residence in Wittemberg, from perhaps the end of May, 1524, probably to the commencement of April, 1525, must have been no period of pleasant holiday. Every available means of making his translation as perfect as his knowledge and his time could make it, was sedulously employed. He had before him in his work not only Erasmus' New Testament, with its Latin version, but the Vulgate, the German translation of Luther, all of which it can be proved that he systematically consulted; some favourite expositors probably; and, without doubt, such grammars and lexicons of Lascaris, Craston, and others as could be procured. The mere mechanical drudgery thus entailed upon him was very considerable, and might have delayed the completion of his task; fortunately, however, he received the assistance of an amanuensis who, if he was somewhat unsuitable as a companion, was at all events serviceable in a humbler capacity. This man, William Roye by name, is not altogether unknown to the student of our early literature; and was one of those restless

beings whom the first stirrings of the Reformation impelled to forsake his monastery and betake himself to a wandering, unsatisfactory life, of little benefit to any one. The reader will, however, prefer to see Tyndale's own account of his eccentric amanuensis.

"While I abode [waited for] a faithful companion, which now hath taken another voyage upon him, to preach Christ, where, I suppose, He was never yet preached (God, which put in his heart thither to go, send His Spirit with him, comfort him, and bring his purpose to good effect),[1] one William Roye, a man somewhat crafty, when he cometh unto new acquaintance, and before he be thorough known, and namely [especially] when all is spent, came unto me and offered his help [sent by Monmouth, as we have seen, who, no doubt, knew where Tyndale was]. As long as he had no money, somewhat I could rule him; but as soon as he had gotten him money, he became like himself again. Nevertheless, I suffered all things till that was ended which I could not do alone without one, both to write and to help me to compare the texts together. When that was ended, I took my leave, and bade him farewell for our two lives, and, as men say, a day longer. After we were departed [*i.e.*, separated], he went and gat him new friends, which thing to do he passeth all that ever I yet knew. And then when he had stored him of money, he gat him to Argentine [Strasburg], where he professeth wonderful faculties, and maketh boast of no small things."[2]

Of this troublesome and ill-assorted companion, whose "walking inordinately," and irrepressible propensity for "fool-

[1] Who this faithful companion was, it is impossible to say. Tyndale evidently had good reason for concealing his name, and it is now impossible even to conjecture it. The supposition that it was Fryth is quite untenable; not a single particular of the description applies to him. Neither was it George Joye, who did not leave England till 1527. It has been suggested that it may have been William Hitton, of whom Tyndale always speaks with great respect: but of him we know so little that it is impossible to decide as to the probability of this conjecture. I have searched all Warham's Register without finding any notice of Hitton.

[2] *Preface to Parable of Wicked Mammon: Works*, Vol. I. p. 37.

ish rhymes," must have greatly vexed the soul of Tyndale, we shall hear more anon; meantime, with his help the work of translation was probably brought nearly to a conclusion during the year's residence at Wittemberg. The assistance which Roye gave to Tyndale was, however, evidently nothing more than that of an amanuensis; and though the New Testament, when it was first imported into England, was commonly spoken of as the work of "William Hutchin and Friar Roye," there is no reason to suppose that Roye's share in it was greater than that which Tyndale assigns in the passage just cited.

In the spring of 1525, Tyndale removed from Wittemberg to Hamburg, to receive the remittance of the ten pounds which he had left with Monmouth. We do not know why he did not again return to Wittemberg; but it is not difficult to conjecture many good reasons for declining to print his translation at a place so sure to be suspected as Wittemberg was. He knew that his translation would not be allowed in England, and that all books imported from Wittemberg were sure to be watched with the most jealous care, as proceeding from the great head-quarters of heresy; and this alone would recommend the propriety of selecting some town less notorious for its Lutheranism than Wittemberg, and from which his book, once printed, might be introduced into England with less trouble and without raising suspicion. For this purpose no city could be better adapted than Cologne; it boasted of some famous printers who had extensive business connections in England; it was, as it still is, entirely devoted to Rome; and from its position it offered far greater facilities than Wittemberg for transmitting the books cheaply and expeditiously to London. This was possibly the reason which induced Tyndale and Roye to remove from Wittemberg to Cologne, taking Hamburg in their way, that they might receive from Monmouth the money without which they could not proceed in their work.

But before narrating their proceedings at Cologne, one

point in their history deserves consideration. Monmouth states in his petition to Wolsey that he "had a little treatise that the priest [Tyndale] sent him when he sent for his money;" and it has been suggested that this was a treatise which had been printed by Tyndale, and was the first offering of his pen to the great cause to which his life was now consecrated. If this were so, then it is evidently a matter of interest to ascertain if possible the nature of this "little treatise." Two opinions have been advanced on this point.

Some writers have imagined that it was a little work incorporated by Foxe in his *Acts and Monuments*, entitled, *The Story of the Examination of William Thorpe before Archbishop Arundel.*[1] But it is quite evident to any one who reads Foxe with care, that Tyndale did not print this book, but simply undertook to modernise its obsolete English; moreover, it was never associated with Tyndale's name, but was assigned by Sir Thomas More to Constantine; and, what seems fatal to the theory, there is not a particle of evidence to show that it belongs to so early a date as 1525, but every reason to believe that it did not appear till some years later.[2]

The second theory, far more interesting if it could be conclusively established, is, that the "little treatise" was in reality the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, which he had printed probably at Wittemberg, as a first instalment of his great work. The evidence in favour of this theory is sufficiently strong to make it by no means improbable, though not so conclusive as to secure its adoption as an important addition to the somewhat meagre story of this part of Tyndale's life. Foxe, it is true, had said in his account of Fryth, that Tyndale when "he placed himself in Germany, did there *first* translate the Gospel of *St. Matthew* into English, and

[1] Walter's *Life of Tyndale*, prefixed to his Works.

[2] See Foxe, Vol. III. p. 249, etc. Sir Thomas More, in his *Confutation*, mentions it in connection with the *Exposition of the seventh chapter of First Corinthians*, and *Jonas*, both later than 1528. He does not, it is true, always adhere to strict chronological order, but in the present case we have no means of proving that he did not do so.

after, the whole of the New Testament;" but this occurs in a passage that literally swarms with errors, and has generally been considered to be merely one of many instances of the careless and rambling manner in which the Martyrologist, who was innocent of all literary skill, is in the habit of expressing himself. More recent investigations, however, have caused it to be surmised that Foxe did really intend to speak of a translation of St. Matthew as being finished, and possibly printed as a distinct work from the subsequent version of the whole of the New Testament. In confirmation of this interpretation various authorities have been cited. Robert Necton, one of the most enterprising of the colporteurs who distributed the prohibited books, when arrested and tried, confessed that for a time, till he succeeded in purchasing some copies of the New Testament of Tyndale's version, he had no books "except the *chapters of Matthew*."[1] Similarly, John Tyball, of Steeple Bumstead, acknowledged, when on his trial, April 28, 1528, that "about two years ago he had possessed *the Gospel of Matthew and Mark in English*."[2] And Robert Ridley, uncle of the martyr, (but widely differing from him in his opinions), writing, probably in 1527, to Henry Golde, one of Warham's chaplains, in fiercest condemnation of "the common and vulgar translation of the New Testament into English, done by Mr. William Hichyns, otherways called Mr. W. Tyndale, and Friar William Roye," specifies distinctly "their commentaries and annotations in *Matthew and Mark in the* FIRST *print*, as well as their *preface in the* SECOND *print*."[3]

References so numerous would almost seem to substantiate beyond any doubt the existence of a translation of the two Gospels of Matthew and Mark, issued before the rest of the New Testament, and furnished with "annotations," that is, probably with marginal notes, as in Luther's German translation, and in Tyndale's quarto version. In this there is nothing in any way improbable or inconsistent with what is

[1] Harleian MSS., 421. [2] *Ibid.*
[3] Cotton MSS., *Cleopatra*, E.V., p. 362.

known of Tyndale's proceedings; and if we admit that this is the true meaning of the passages cited, and that the Gospels of Matthew and Mark were issued separately before the completion of the Testament, then we may with almost perfect certainty assume that they were printed, *not* at Hamburg, as has been hitherto said, for there were no printers there, but at Wittemberg, not later than March, 1525. This would be an interesting addition to the history of Tyndale's life; but it must be confessed that there are still some difficulties which stand in need of explanation. Foxe is so inaccurate in his life of Fryth that his assertion is of little value. Necton, in his evidence, does not specify the "chapters of Matthew" as the work of Tyndale, and they may have been manuscript fragments of Wycliffe's version. A careful examination of the sequel of Tyball's evidence, moreover, seems to make it probable that he also was speaking of a Wycliffite version.

As to Ridley's specific assertions, it is to be noted that he was merely writing from memory; and as his letter totally ignores the existence of the octavo Testament, which was certainly known to be circulating in England when he wrote, it is quite conceivable that in the confusion of indistinct recollection, he imagined that he had seen a "*first* print of Matthew and Mark with annotations," and "a *second* print of the whole New Testament with a preface" (but apparently without annotations); when what he really had seen was, a New Testament in *quarto* which had *both* annotations and preface, and an *octavo*, which had *neither*.[1] Moreover, it is difficult to believe that a work so important as this, and so certain, by its annotations, to give offence to the authorities, should never have been mentioned among the prohibited books. We have many lists both from friends and enemies of the works issued by the early Reformers, and clandestinely introduced

[1] In fact, there is no edition of the New Testament, which, strictly speaking, answers to Ridley's description of the *second print*, so that we may justly suspect some confusion from an inattentive examination of the books, or a confused recollection of them.

into England, but in none of them does any notice of the two Gospels occur.[1] Whatever probabilities, therefore, have been advanced in proof of the publication of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark by Tyndale in the first year of his exile, this must still be regarded only as a probable supposition not sufficiently confirmed to be accepted as an ascertained fact.

To resume, therefore, the thread of the narrative, we believe that from Hamburg, after no longer delay than was necessary to receive the money which Monmouth had sent by Hans Collingbek, Tyndale and Roye proceeded to Cologne, to commit to the printer the work which had been prosecuted so diligently at Wittemberg. The translation was, according to the only evidence we possess, practically finished before they arrived at Cologne, needing nothing probably but the care and revision which Tyndale would naturally bestow upon it. Printers were not difficult to be found in that ancient Rhenish city; Peter Quentel and Arnold Byrckmann were renowned throughout Germany, and were not unknown in London. Cologne was, indeed, strongly opposed to the doctrines of Luther; but Tyndale was provided with money to indemnify the printers against any serious loss; and, as Roman Catholic writers at the time complained, there was everywhere such a demand for books forbidden by the ecclesiastical authorities, that a ready sale was anticipated, so that the printers were easily persuaded to undertake the work.

Every precaution was used to ensure secrecy; and the condition of Germany, torn with intestine dissensions, and agitated by the insurrection of the peasants, was supposed to be favourable to the concealment which they courted. Roye's unsettled and obtrusive temper was doubtless a great source of anxiety to Tyndale; but he knew how to restrain his tongue by keeping his pockets empty. All seemed to go well with them; they escaped the observation of the many hostile eyes around; their visits to the printing-office were so

[1] This is not owing to their fragmentary character, for the separate books of the *Pentateuch* are all denounced individually.

skilfully arranged that they excited no suspicion; the work was progressing favourably, and the heart of Tyndale beat high with hope. Three thousand copies were to be put to press; and already the work, a quarto with prologue and marginal notes and references, had proceeded as far as the letter "K" in the signature of the sheets,[1] when suddenly the senate of the city issued orders that the printers should at once suspend their labours, and Tyndale and Roye, to escape imprisonment or worse consequences, were compelled to snatch away what they could of the finished sheets, and sail up the Rhine to some more hospitable refuge.

Unknown to them, an enemy, keen-eyed and sharp-witted, had been for some time lurking in Cologne; and it was his unwearied and somewhat unscrupulous intervention that had thus arrested the work when all seemed to promise fair for a speedy completion. It was a heavy trial, doubtless, for that faithful heart of Tyndale, which had been already so grievously tried; but if he owed no gratitude to the officious zeal of the man who thus interrupted him, we are at least indebted to him for a clear and graphic account of the whole proceedings, which the reader will peruse with interest. John Cochloeus is probably unknown, even by name, to ordinary readers; but to students of the history of the Reformation in Germany he is sufficiently familiar, as a ready and voluminous controversialist, who seemed to consider himself specially raised up by Providence to oppose and refute the opinions of Luther, and who was, indeed, generally spoken of by the Roman Catholics as "the scourge of Luther." He it was who so inopportunely discovered Tyndale's secret, and so summarily arrested his work; and as he never in his life-time received any suitable recompense for what seemed to him a most invaluable service to the cause of the Church, he has taken care that posterity should not forget his merits, by recording the whole transaction in his *Commentary on the Acts and Writings of*

[1] *i.e.*, probably to St. Mark's Gospel; the fragment preserved in the Grenville Library terminates with "H."

Luther.[1] His narrative diverges so frequently into personal details foreign to our subject, that it cannot be presented entire; enough, however, will be selected to render the whole occurrence intelligible to the reader, and to fix with certainty the precise date of this interesting crisis in Tyndale's life.

In the year 1525 the disturbances connected with the insurrection of the peasants reached Frankfort-on-the-Maine; and during the Easter holidays, that is, in the week after April 16th, the people of the city rose and threatened violence to the clergy.[2] The deans of two of the chief churches, Martorff and John Cochloeus, apprehensive of the fury of the populace, on account of their well-known opposition to Luther, fled from Frankfort and took refuge in Mayence. The disturbances followed Cochloeus to his new asylum; on St. Mark's Day, April 25th, the people rose, and for a time became masters of the city. Driven from Mayence, the unfortunate dean repaired to Cologne; but here the same evil fortune attended him. During the Whitsuntide holidays (June 5th) the commons of Cologne rebelled, and compelled the senate and the clergy to resign much of their authority. For fourteen days the rioters were in the ascendant, and Cochloeus was, doubtless, meditating flight to some quieter haven; when, in the end, the power of the Prince Archbishop prevailed, and order was restored. Cochloeus was then invited to return to his office at Frankfort; but he resolved to shake off the dust of his feet as a testimony against the ingratitude of the rebellious city, and for nine months he lived in exile at Cologne. He was thus at Cologne at the very time that Tyndale came there to print his translation; and being an indefatigable man of letters, he naturally employed his leisure in literary pursuits, and was engaged at the time in superintending a work which was actually printed in the same establishment with the English New Testament. The preservation of Tyndale's

[1] Written in Latin and printed in folio at Mentz and elsewhere; my references are in all cases to the Mentz edition.

[2] Cochloeus, *Commentarii*, etc., p. 114; *feriis Paschalibus*.

secret thus became a matter of extreme difficulty; it was scarcely possible that it should not somehow leak out; after some time the indiscretion of one of the workmen disclosed the whole, and Tyndale had to retreat baffled from the scene. But this part of the transaction may more appropriately be told in Cochloeus's own language.[1]

"Two English apostates, *who had been some time at Wittemberg*, not only sought to corrupt their own merchants, who encouraged and supported them in their exile, but also hoped that whether the king wished or not, the whole people of England would soon become Lutherans, by means of Luther's New Testament, which they had translated into the English language.[2] They had already [before Luther wrote his letter, September 1st, 1525] come to Cologne, that they might multiply by thousands through the press, the Testament which they had translated, and might then secretly convey it to England concealed under other goods. Indeed, so confident were they of success, that at the very outset they requested the printers to put to press six thousand copies. They, however, being somewhat apprehensive of suffering a serious loss, should any misfortune occur, put to press only three thousand copies; for if these were sold to advantage they could easily be printed afresh. Already Pomeranus [*i.e.*, Bugenhagius, a well-known Reformer] had sent an epistle to the saints in England, and Luther himself had also written to the king. And as it was believed that the New Testament would speedily follow, the Lutherans were possessed of such great hope, and inflated with such vain confidence, that in the elation of their joy they disclosed the secret prematurely by their foolish boastings.

"At that time John Cochloeus, Dean of the Church of the Blessed Virgin at Frankfort, was living in exile in Cologne;"—

[1] What follows is given by Cochloeus under 1526, not because it happened in that year, but because the whole subject is connected with Luther's letter to Henry, which that sovereign received and answered in 1526.

[2] The meaning of this assertion will be explained subsequently.

but we need not repeat the personal details into which the dean here diverges; suffice it to say that Cochloeus was occupied at Cologne in searching for the works of Rupert, a former abbot of the monastery of Deutz, on the opposite side of the Rhine, and had undertaken to prepare an edition of them which Quentel and Byrckmann were to print. He then resumes his narrative of the discovery of Tyndale's "wicked design." "Becoming, in consequence of these engagements, better known to, and more familiar with, the Cologne printers, he sometimes heard them confidently boast over their cups that whether the king and cardinal would or not, all England would, in a short time, become Lutheran. He heard also that there were two Englishmen lurking there, *learned, skilful in languages*, eloquent, whom, however, he never could see or converse with. Inviting, therefore, some printers to his lodging, after they were excited with wine, one of them in private conversation disclosed to him the secret by which England was to be drawn over to the party of Luther, namely, that there were at that very time in the press three thousand copies of the Lutheran New Testament, translated into the English language, and that they had advanced as far as the letter 'K' in the order of the sheets; that the expenses were abundantly supplied by English merchants who, when the work was printed, were to convey it secretly and disperse it widely through all England, before the king or the cardinal could discover or prohibit it.

"Cochloeus, though mentally distracted between fear and wonder, disguised his grief in a wonderful manner. But the next day, considering sadly with himself the magnitude of the danger, he deliberated how he might conveniently obstruct these very wicked attempts. He went accordingly in secret to Herman Rinck, a senator of Cologne and a knight, well known both to the Emperor and the King of England, and he made known to him the whole affair, as by the help of the wine he had learned it. Rinck, to make sure of everything, sent another into the house where the work was

printing, according to the information given by Cochloeus; and when he was informed that the matter was as it had been described, and that there was an enormous supply of paper there, he went to the Senate of Cologne, and procured an order interdicting the printers from proceeding further with that work. The two English apostates fled, carrying away with them the sheets that were printed, and sailing up the Rhine to Worms, where the people were under the full influence of Lutheranism, in order that in that city they might complete by another printer the work that had been begun. Rinck and Cochloeus, however, immediately wrote to warn the king, the cardinal, and the Bishop of Rochester, to take the utmost precaution in all the seaports of England, lest that most pernicious article of merchandise should be introduced."[1]

Nothing, apparently, could be more complete than the triumph of Cochloeus; he had not only interrupted the printing of the New Testament at Cologne, but he had disclosed the secret of Tyndale's intentions to those who were most able to take effectual steps to prevent the introduction of the work into England, if Tyndale should ever succeed in getting it printed at all. Tyndale himself was too magnanimous to make any allusion to the persevering animosity which had thus vastly added to the difficulties of his undertaking; but his companion Roye, when freed from the restraint of Tyndale's presence, gave vent in sharp, satirical lines to his indignation at the inveterate spite of "Cocclaye," whom he describes as

> "A little, praty, foolish poade,
> But although his stature be small,
> Yet men say he lacketh no gall,
> More venomous than any toad."[2]

The reader who sympathises with Tyndale in the heavy

[1] Cochloeus, *Commentarii*, etc., as above, p. 132, etc.

[2] Roye's satire, *Rede me, and be not wrothe*, printed with notes in the *Harleian Miscellany*, Vol. IX. A piece like this, of considerable historical value, as the work of one who was Tyndale's companion for nearly two years, is surely worth reprinting under careful editorial revision. [Mr. Edward Arber included it in his admirable series of *English Reprints* in 1871. EDITOR.]

discouragement that so suddenly fell upon him, will probably not be sorry to learn that Cochloeus was completely disappointed of the reward which he anticipated for so brilliant a service; Henry and Wolsey recognised in words his superlative merit; but, as he himself subsequently lamented, he was left like Mordecai at the gate without any substantial recompense for his disclosure of a plot as dangerous as that against the life of Ahasuerus.[1]

Though grievously disappointed and seriously inconvenienced by this unexpected occurrence at Cologne, Tyndale had no intention of abandoning the work, even when it seemed to be surrounded by endless difficulties. His retreat had been sudden and precipitate, yet his choice of Worms, as a new place of refuge, was not made without good reason. That ancient city, famous in those times for the recent heroic appearance of Luther before the Imperial Diet, had adopted the opinions of the Reformation, so that Tyndale was secured against the possible interference of officious priests and hostile magistrates. Worms, moreover, was in those days superior in importance to Cologne; it enjoyed almost equal advantages of intercourse with England; and in Peter Schoeffer, son of the Schoeffer who had been associated with Faust at Mentz, Tyndale would find a printer able to accomplish his wishes, and inclined, from his Lutheran sympathies, to embark with alacrity in his great undertaking. No time, therefore, would be lost in resuming, at Worms, the work which had been interrupted at Cologne. It was, as Cochloeus informs us, not long after the date of Luther's letter to Henry, *i. e.*, September 1, 1525, that the discovery took place which compelled Tyndale and Roye to set out on what was then the tedious and even dangerous voyage up the Rhine to Worms. Their arrival in that city may be assigned, with every probability, to the month of October, and not many days probably would elapse before operations were actively

[1] See his *Scopa*, signature B 2 (the work is not paged), and the letters of More at the end of the work.

recommenced; and the hearts of the exiles would once again beat high with the hope of accomplishing their long-meditated design.

An important modification, however, was introduced into their plans. Schoeffer may, not improbably, have objected to the somewhat troublesome and ungrateful task of merely completing what had been begun by his rival at Cologne; and there was quite certain to be considerable practical difficulty in procuring type and form that would exactly range with those employed in the sheets that Quentel had printed. Accordingly, the size and character of the book were materially changed; and instead of a quarto, with prologue and copious doctrinal notes in the margin, Schoeffer went to press with an octavo, destitute of either prologue or glosses.[1] The sheets which had been snatched from destruction at Cologne were not, however, lost: the New Testament with glosses, which Quentel had begun, was completed by some printer unknown, though not improbably by Schoeffer at Worms. Of this, indeed, no direct evidence has ever been produced; and as not a fragment of the quarto, beyond what was printed at Cologne, is known to exist, we have no opportunity of ascertaining the printer by those indications of type, form, illustration, and watermark which, in the hands of an expert, would long ago have settled the question beyond dispute[2].

[1] This seems to me at once the simplest and the best explanation of what was done at Worms. Anderson supposes that Cochloeus had described the quarto to Henry, and that Tyndale believed it imprudent in consequence to proceed with it alone. But it seems strange that Tyndale should know the contents of Cochloeus' letter, and if he was much concerned about *prudence* surely he would not have proceeded with the quarto at all. Professor Walter's explanation involves assertions of which no proof can be given.

[2] Some writers imagine that this interrupted work, which could not possibly have proceeded further than the end of St. Matthew, was the *Gospel of St. Matthew* to which Foxe refers, and which Necton possessed (see *supra*, pp. 108, 109). Even if this were so, this could not have been the treatise which Tyndale sent to Monmouth in April, 1525, for it was not then printed. Moreover it is certain that an edition of the New Testament *with glosses* was in circulation in 1526, and was denounced by Tunstal; so that it is indisputable that either the Cologne edition was

The fact, however, of the completion, nearly about the same time, of two editions of the New Testament, is placed beyond a doubt by the earliest official notice of Tyndale's work—the prohibition of that bishop whose patronage had been solicited in vain—which distinctly specifies "many books of the translation," as being in circulation, "some *with* glosses and some *without*." Thus the hostility of Cochloeus, which at one time threatened to arrest the progress of the work, only delayed its completion for a time, and seems to have enabled Tyndale to carry out his original design of printing not *three* but *six* thousand copies of his translation. There were friends in England, as Cochloeus admitted, willing to supply the necessary funds; Schoeffer was more friendly than Quentel had been; and according to the testimony of an eminent German contemporary,[1] "six thousand copies of the English Testament were printed at Worms."

The few weeks intervening between the period of arrival at Worms and the close of 1525 would not, of course, suffice, even with all the energy of Tyndale and Roye in correcting and revising, to complete what must have been in those times of imperfect mechanical appliances an undertaking of considerable magnitude. But early in the spring of 1526, as soon as the relaxing rigour of winter permitted navigation to be resumed, the English New Testament, in both forms, would be with all secrecy smuggled over into England.[2] The German merchants had for several years carried on an

finished or another similar one, of which on this theory not a leaf has been preserved.

[1] Spalatin's *Diary*. See subsequently the passage in full.

[2] It is naturally impossible to say *when* the New Testaments were first brought to England. Anderson, who has unfortunately transferred to 1526 the occurrences at Oxford in 1528, is bound in consequence to assume that they were in England at the end of January, or even earlier, but this has not been proved, and the difficulty of transport at that season renders it very improbable. The earliest notice of its presence in England which I have observed, occurs in the evidence of John Pykas, who, on March 7th, 1528, confessed that *about a two years last past he bought a New Testament;* this plainly points to some date posterior to March, 1526, as the time of purchase. I do not believe they were in England before April or May of that year.

extensive trade in the importation of the prohibited books of Luther and the Continental Reformers; and in England there existed a skilfully organised system of colportage by which the works thus introduced had been sold in London, in the country towns, and in the Universities, without attracting the notice of the ecclesiastical authorities. Henry and Wolsey had, indeed, been warned of this threatened invasion of England by the "Word of God in the native tongue;" and the warning of Cochloeus had been repeated by Lee, Henry's almoner, and subsequently Wolsey's successor in the See of York, who thus wrote from Bordeaux, on December 2nd:—

"Please it your highness to understand that I am certainly informed as I passed in this country, that an Englishman, your subject, at the solicitation and instance of Luther, with whom he is, hath translated the New Testament into English, and within few days intendeth to arrive with the same imprinted, in England. I need not to advertise your grace what infection and danger may ensue hereby, if it be not withstanded. This is the next [*i.e.*, nearest] way to fulfil [*i.e.*, to fill full] your realm with Lutherans. For all Luther's opinions be grounded upon bare words of Scripture, not well taken nor understanded, which your grace hath opened [made clear] in sundry places of your royal book. All our forefathers, governors of the Church of England, hath with all diligence forbid, and eschewed publication of English Bibles, as appeareth in constitutions provincial of the Church of England. Now, sir, as God hath endued your grace with Christian courage to set forth the standard against these Philistines, and to vanquish them, so I doubt not but that He will assist your grace to prosecute and perform the same, that is, to undertread them that they shall not now again lift up their heads, which they endeavour now by means of English Bibles. They know what hurt such books hath done in your realm in times past. Hitherto, blessed be God, your realm is safe from infection of Luther's sect, as for so much that although any peradventure be secretly blotted within, yet for fear of

your royal majesty, which hath drawn his sword in God's cause, they dare not openly avow. Wherefore, I cannot doubt but that your noble grace will valiantly maintain that you have so nobly begun. The realm of France hath been somewhat touched with this sect, in so much that it hath entered among the doctors [*i.e.*, theologians] of Paris, whereof some be in prison, some fled, some called *in judicium.* . . . And yet, blessed be God, your noble realm is yet unblotted. Wherefore, lest any danger might ensue, if these books secretly should be brought in, I thought my duty to advertise your grace thereof, considering that it toucheth your high honour, and the wealth [*i.e.*, well-being] and integrity of the Christian faith within your realm; which cannot long endure if these books may come in."[1]

All this vehement adjuration might have been dispensed with; Henry was not in the least inclined to tolerate the introduction of the English New Testament into his realm. Fortunately, however, for his subjects, the enterprise of the merchants was more than a match for the power of the sovereign and the hostility of the bishops; and, as we shall presently see, in spite of all warnings and all precautions, the work of Tyndale was safely conveyed into England, and widely circulated there, to the inexpressible joy and comfort of many who had long walked in darkness.

Nearly two years had now passed over Tyndale's head since he left his native land. His life in exile had not been a smooth one, and he had had bitter experience of the vicissitudes to which his faith exposed him: but at last he had surmounted all difficulties and accomplished the work on which for years the whole energies of his mind had been concentrated. At length, by God's mercy, his proud boast at Sodbury had been realised; and the very poorest of his countrymen, the very boy at the plough, if he could read, might know Holy Scripture as well as any doctor did. At

[1] Cotton MSS., *Vespasian* C. iii. fol. 211; the letter has been printed in Sir Henry Ellis's *Original Letters*, Series 3, Vol. II.

length he might unbend from the labour which had so long taxed, and yet cheered, both body and soul; and as he watched the precious volumes passing, bound or in sheets, into the hands of the enterprising merchants who were to convey them to their destination, need we doubt that the heart of the patriotic translator swelled with fond thoughts of the home from which he was so far separated, and that with his voice of thanks for the grace which had enabled him to bring his work to a successful termination, there mingled an earnest prayer for abundant blessing on his countrymen for whom he had so faithfully laboured? No alloy of baser pride was associated with these pure emotions: the book was not intended to secure the fame of the translator; it was sent forth anonymously into the world, without anything to indicate the man to whom England was indebted for so great a treasure. Tyndale had not laboured for money or for applause, and he was content "patiently to abide the reward of the Last Day."[1]

[1] *Preface to the Wicked Mammon.*

CHAPTER V.

TYNDALE'S FIRST NEW TESTAMENT; DESCRIPTION OF THE BOOK IN ITS TWO FORMS; TYNDALE'S QUALIFICATIONS AS A TRANSLATOR; SPECIMENS OF HIS WORK.

THE issue of the first New Testament forms too important an event in the life of Tyndale to be passed over with the mere historical narrative of its occurrence; the reader may reasonably expect to be supplied with detailed information as to the exact nature and merits of that work, which constitutes Tyndale's claim on the gratitude of all English-speaking people. And it is the more necessary to present these details, because an enormous amount of misconception has long prevailed on the subject, which it is desirable, not for Tyndale's sake merely, but also, in some measure, for that of the English New Testament, if possible, effectually to remove. Without, therefore, entering minutely into questions that belong more appropriately to the province of the antiquarian and the bibliographer, we shall endeavour clearly and succinctly to present in this chapter such information concerning Tyndale's first New Testament as, it may be presumed, must be of interest to all intelligent readers.

According to the statement of Buschius, already quoted from Spalatin's journal, six thousand copies of the New Testament were printed at Worms; that is, as has been generally understood, three thousand in octavo, and as many in quarto. And the reader, perhaps, takes for granted, that of this large number, some considerable fraction has been preserved intact through the changes of three centuries and a half. Had the ravages of time alone been directed against the book, no

doubt not a few might still be found safe in the shelter of our older libraries; but the New Testaments were for many years rigorously prohibited, they were eagerly sought for by the officers of the Church, and publicly burned whenever they were discovered. Thus it has happened that of the three thousand *quarto* New Testaments, only a single copy remains, and that in a most imperfect state: and of the *octavo*, only two are known to exist; one, incomplete, in the library of St. Paul's Cathedral, and the other, wanting only the title-page, in the Baptist College at Bristol. A brief description of the fragmentary quarto, and the nearly perfect octavo, will not be unacceptable to the reader, and cannot be thought out of place in a life of Tyndale.

The quarto fragment is justly esteemed the chief treasure of the Grenville Library in the British Museum. So completely, indeed, had this New Testament begun at Cologne disappeared from view, that its very existence had been ignored and even denied; and eminent authorities had maintained that no New Testament was printed in English, before that which was issued surreptitiously at Antwerp towards the close of 1526. In 1834, Thomas Rodd, a London bookseller, in examining a volume which contained a treatise by the Swiss Reformer, Oecolampadius, found that there was bound up with it a fragment of the Gospel of St. Matthew in English. There was no title-page, nor anything to indicate the name of the translator, or the time or place of its publication. It was evident, however, that the leaves had originally formed part of what was intended to be a complete version of the whole New Testament; for the fragment contained a list of all the books in its Table of Contents. But notwithstanding the absence of all the ordinary indications of printer or authorship, there were not wanting certain clues by the help of which ingenious scholars were able to solve those obscure questions.

Thus it was observed that the prologue, with which the fragment began, commenced with an elegant ornamental Y

(used for I), which on further investigation was found to occur in several books that were undoubtedly productions of Quentel's press.[1] Still further, there was prefixed to the translation a large bold woodcut of Saint Matthew, represented as busily engaged writing his Gospel, and in the act of dipping his pen into an inkstand held for him by an angel. This very same woodcut is also used, curiously enough, in one of the volumes edited by Tyndale's enemy Cochloeus during his exile at Cologne, viz., a Commentary on St. Matthew by Rupert, Abbot of Deutz. In this latter work, however, in order to accommodate it to the smaller space available, the woodcut has been slightly reduced in size; and we have thus ocular demonstration that the fragment of the New Testament must have preceded the Commentary of Rupert; as the entire block must, of necessity, have preceded the reduced one. Rupert's work on St. Matthew was finished June 12th, 1526; the fragment, therefore, belongs to an earlier date. The prologue, moreover, contains those very assertions for which Tyndale's New Testament, on its first appearance, was held up to public reprobation. Thus every step in the identification is complete; and by internal evidence which it is impossible to dispute, the leaves are demonstrated to belong to that first edition of the New Testament whose history we have just read, which was begun under such favourable auspices at Cologne, and was so unexpectedly interrupted by the vindictive energy of Cochloeus. The precious fragment came subsequently into the possession of the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville, and was bequeathed by him to the British Museum. It consists of only thirty-one leaves, and finishes abruptly with the words "Friend, how camest thou in hither and" in the twenty-second chapter of St. Matthew. The inner margin contains a few references to parallel passages, such as are commonly printed in modern Bibles; while in the outer margin are

[1] Mr. Offor takes the credit of having first suggested these points of resemblance; I do not presume to determine whether he does so on sufficient grounds. See his *MS. Notes on Anderson's Annals* in the Museum.

placed notes of various kinds, doctrinal, explanatory, and polemic, which are, in fact, the *pestilent glosses* so repeatedly denounced by the English authorities.[1]

The history of the one perfect copy of the *octavo* Testament of Worms can be traced back for upwards of a century. Somewhere about the year 1740, the Earl of Oxford, the collector of the famous Harleian Library, secured it through one of his numerous agents, whom he rewarded for the discovery with a payment of ten pounds, and an annuity of twenty. At the death of Lord Oxford his library was purchased by Osborne, the famous London bookseller, who, in complete ignorance of the value of the work, sold it to the great bibliographer, Joseph Ames, for fifteen shillings. After passing through the hands of another bookseller, it came into the possession of the Rev. Dr. Gifford, one of the Assistant Librarians of the British Museum, who gave twenty guineas for it. Dying in 1784, he bequeathed the precious treasure, with the rest of his valuable collection of Bibles and rare books, to the Baptist College in his native city of Bristol; and there the volume rests in a fire-proof safe, secure, it is to be hoped, against all further vicissitudes of time. The book, as has already been stated, wants the title-page,[2] and contains no date nor name of printer or translator; but the proof of its identity with the New Testament printed at Worms, as described in the previous chapter, is complete. It has been demonstrated by the most unquestionable of all evidence, the juxtaposition of facsimiles, that the same type is used in the Bristol New Testament as in other works of Schoeffer's printing preserved in the royal libraries at Stuttgard and Munich; that the water-marks are of similar design; and that some of the illustrative vignettes

[1] The precious volume is numbered 12,179 in the Grenville Library in the Museum: it has been bound in blue morocco, and leaves have been inserted to make the book as near as can be calculated to the original size. The prologue has been printed in the Parker Society Edition of Tyndale's *Works*. The whole has been photo-lithographed by Mr. Arber, and issued with a valuable preface. No Biblical scholar can consider his library complete without a copy of this work.

[2] The title-page that used to be shown, one of Mr. Offor's manufacture, has very properly been taken out.

are identical. In short, no possible doubt remains on the identity of the book. Unlike the work begun at Cologne, this octavo New Testament contains neither prologue nor marginal glosses, nor anything in addition to the sacred text, except a very brief "Epistle to the Reader," subjoined to the book, mainly by way of apologising for the haste and consequent imperfection with which the volume had been finished. The copy which has actually been preserved at Bristol seems to have belonged to some person of wealth; as all the capitals, vignettes, and paragraphs are illuminated, the pages are neatly enclosed with red lines, and references to parallel passages are inserted in ink in the margin, evidently by a contemporary hand.[1]

Such are the two remaining specimens of Tyndale's earliest labours in the translation of the New Testament; and a collation of the fragment of the quarto with the complete octavo, makes it quite certain that they contain one and the same version. There are, indeed, several differences in the spelling of the two; but these are sufficiently accounted for by the supposition, obviously an exceedingly reasonable one, that in reprinting the text at Worms, Tyndale took the opportunity of correcting any mistakes in the orthography which had crept into the quarto at Cologne. The question, occasionally asked, whether the quarto or the octavo was first finished and sent to England, we do not pretend to answer. The fragment of the quarto that has been preserved, beyond all question preceded anything that was printed at Worms, for the evidence of Cochloeus is conclusive on this point; but whether the quarto, already begun, was at once completed, or whether its publication was delayed till the smaller issue was finished, is a point on which, in the total absence of all authentic evidence, any decision must be mere idle conjecture.[2] All that can be

[1] I have examined the volume myself; but in my details I have preferred to rely on Mr. Fry's Introduction to his admirable facsimile of the book: if any admirer of Tyndale wishes an appropriate memento of the illustrious translator, let him procure Mr. Fry's beautiful work.

[2] Anderson, and even Westcott, seem to suppose that some inference may be

affirmed with certainty is, that the very earliest official notice of Tyndale's New Testament in England, distinctly specifies both the edition *with glosses* (the quarto), and that *without glosses* (the octavo), as dispersed in great numbers throughout the diocese of London.

Passing, however, from these details, which are only of minor moment, a far more important question demands our consideration. It may be asked, "Was Tyndale properly qualified to translate the New Testament, and what is the real literary value of his translation?" These questions are of prime importance, and they demand a plain and satisfactory reply.

It has been customary to speak of Tyndale as an indifferent scholar, ignorant of Hebrew, imperfectly acquainted with Greek, knowing only Latin and perhaps German, and making his versions of Scripture from the Vulgate and from Luther. Even Fuller takes for granted that he "rendered the Old Testament out of the Latin, his best friends not entitling him to any skill at all in the Hebrew."[1] Fuller, to be sure, is no very great authority, and would have been sadly at a loss to name any of the *best friends* of Tyndale who had thus acknowledged his total ignorance of Hebrew; but other writers who profess to have made elaborate inquiry speak in the same contemptuous style of Tyndale's meagre scholarship. Hallam, "classic Hallam, much renowned for Greek," informs his readers, in a sentence replete with errors, that Tyndale's New Testament was "published in 1535 or 1536!" and was "*avowedly* taken from the German of Luther and from the Latin Vulgate." Bishop Marsh, in his *Theological Lectures*, considers himself to have proved by copious induction, that Tyndale's version was taken from that of Luther, and that,

drawn as to the priority of the quarto from the greater faultiness of its spelling. Such an inference would be legitimate enough if we could compare the octavo with that portion of the quarto which was not printed at Cologne: but of this not a line has been preserved, and the priority of Quentel's part of the work is established beyond all question by the history of Cochloeus.

[1] Fuller's *Church History*, Vol. III. p. 162. Brewer's edition.

blyng? sake. Bt ye not lyke them there fore. For youre father knoweth wherof ye have neade / be fore ye axe of him. After thys maner therefore praye ye.

Luc. xi. ¶ O oure father / which art in heven halowed be thy name. Let thy kyngdom come. Thy wyll be fulfilled / aswell in erth / as hit ys in heven. Geve vs this daye oure dayly breade. And forgeve vs oure treaspases / even as we forgeve them whych treaspas vs. Lede vs nott in to temptacion. but delyvre vs from yvell / Amen. For and yf ye shall forgeve other men there treaspases / youre father in hevē shall also forgeve you. But and ye will nott forgeve men there treaspases / no more shall / youre father forgeve youre treaspases.

Math. viii. Mar. xi.

¶ Moreovre when ye faste / be not sad as the ypocrytt? are. For thy dissigure there faces / that hit myght appere vnto mē that they faste. Verely y say vnto you / they have there rewarde. But thou whē thou fastest / annoynte thyne heed / and washe thy face / that it appere not vnto men howe that thou fastest: but vnto thy father which ys in secrete: and thy father which seyth in secrete / shall rewarde the openly.

Lu. xii. ¶ Gaddre not treasure to gether on erth / where ruste and moththes corrupte / and where theves breake through and steale. But gaddre ye treasure to gyddre in heven / whtre nether ruste / ner yet moththes corrupte: and where theves nether breake vppe / ner yet steale. For wheresoever youre treasure ys / theare are youre hertt? also.

Luc. xi. ¶ The light of thy body is thyne eye. Where fore if thyne eye be *syngle / all thy body ys full of light. But and yf thyne eye be wycked / then is all thy boddy full of dercknes. Whrefore yf the light that ys in the be dercknes: howe greate ys that dercknes?

Lu. xvi. ¶ No man can serve two masters. For other he shall hate the one / and love the other: or els he shall lene to the one / and despise that other. Ye cannott serve god and mamon. There fore y saye vnto you / be not carefull for youre lyfe what ye shall eate / or what ye shall dryncke / nor yet for youre boddy / what raymēt ye shall weare. Ys not the lyfe more worth then meate? and the boddy moare of value then rayment? Beholde

Lu. xii.

es deserve ani thyng of god as a labourar deserueth hys hyre. For all good thynges come of the bounte usnes / liberalite / mercy / promyses / & trewth of god bi the deseruinge of Christ? bloud ōly but it ys a maner of spekinge, as we saye (thy labur or going was well rewarded) vnto hi that hath but fett only the promyses of a nodyr man.

*Syngle. The eye is single when a man i all his dedes loketh butt on the wil of god / & loketh nott for laude / honour or eni otherre warde in this worlde. nother ascrybeth heven or a hyer roume ī hevē vnto his dedes: but accepteth heven as a thig purchased bi the bloud of Christe / & worketh frely for loves sake only.

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[1] Full

in fact, Tyndale knew nothing beyond Latin and German. And in more recent times, Dean Hook, without entering into any examination of the subject, asserts incidentally, that Tyndale's translation was only doing into English the Septuagint and the Vulgate;[1] forgetting, apparently, that the man who could "do the Septuagint into English" needed not to rely upon the Vulgate. Minor writers have, of course, followed in the wake of these authorities, and without ever having studied or even seen Tyndale's work presume to indulge in ill-natured sneers against Tyndale's supposed ignorance.[2]

Questions of fact can only be determined by testimony and investigation; and, fortunately, Tyndale's scholarship can be sufficiently established by an overwhelming array of evidence both external and internal. Sir Thomas More, a thoroughly competent judge, perfectly free from all prepossession in Tyndale's favour, admits that Tyndale "before he fell into these frenzies [of Luther's opinions] was taken for full prettily learned." Whilst criticising and condemning his translation on account of its countenancing Lutheran doctrines, he never denies Tyndale's competent scholarship; nay, he even goes so far as to suggest that a certain book which he bitterly opposed, could not possibly have been written by Tyndale on account of its lack of learning.[3] Cochloeus, whose determined hostility we have already noticed, speaks of Tyndale and his associate at Cologne as "learned, *skilful in languages*, and eloquent." George Joye, an English Protestant refugee,

[1] *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, Vol. VI. p. 233. The Dean is very unfortunate in his statements on the history of the English Bible. He asserts, for example, that in 1526 Tunstal bought up *the whole of Wicliffe's* translation of the New Testament and burned them!! What he meant to say being evidently this, that in 1529 Tunstal bought up a considerable number of *Tyndale's* New Testaments and other prohibited Works, and burned them in 1530.

[2] [An elaborate examination of the evidence of Tyndale's Greek and Hebrew scholarship is contained in an exhaustive review of Dr. Mombert's edition of *William Tyndale's Five Books of Moses*, printed in the *Athenæum* for April 18th and May 2nd, 1885. EDITOR.]

[3] The words cited are from Sir Thomas More's *Answer to the first part of a poisoned book which a nameless heretic hath named "The Supper of the Lord," Works*, pp. 1035–1138; Sir Thomas often repeats the same opinion.

who quarrelled with Tyndale and writes with most extravagant vehemence against him, is, indeed, spiteful enough to insinuate in one part of his furious tirade that he "wondered how Tyndale could compare his translation with *Greek* sith himself is not so exquisitely seen therein;" yet in another place he speaks freely of Tyndale's "high learning in his *Hebrew, Greek, Latin*, etc."[1] The testimony of Foxe and other admirers may, perhaps, be undervalued as prejudiced, but we have the authority of an eminent German scholar who had met Tyndale at Worms in 1526, and who subsequently stated to Spalatin that the Englishman who translated the New Testament into English was "*so skilled in seven languages, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, English, French, that whichever he spoke you would suppose it his native tongue.*"[2] The scholar who has in such emphatic terms vouched for Tyndale's learning was Herman Buschius,[3] the friend of Erasmus and Reuchlin, one of the leaders in the revival of letters, one of the conjoint authors of the *Epistolæ obscurorum virorum*, a critic, in short, whose verdict can only be questioned by one who is entirely ignorant of the literary history of the sixteenth century.

"But," it may be asked, "admitting that Tyndale was sufficiently acquainted with Greek to be able to translate from the original, did he in fact translate from the original? and if so, what is meant by the accusation so frequently brought against him by his contemporaries, that he translated *Luther's* New Testament?" To this last question no satis-

[1] Joye's *Apology*; the passages quoted occur in C. iii. and E. ii. reverse; the book is not paged, and is extremely rare. I quote from a MS. copy of it kindly lent me by Mr. Fry. [This exceedingly interesting and valuable little book has been made accessible to all readers by Mr. Edward Arber, who in 1882 printed it in his English Scholar's Library. EDITOR.]

[2] Schelhorn, *Amœnitates Literariæ*. Vol. IV. p. 431; under the day after St. Laurence's day, 1526, *i.e.*, August 11.

[3] On Buschius, and his position in the *respublica literarum*, points which have been singularly neglected in histories of the Bible, see Sir William Hamilton's *Discussions*, p. 327, etc. Some of our English literary critics ought to ask the *literati* of the Continent what *they* think of men who dispute Buschius's testimony.

factory answer has yet been attempted in any history of the English Bible; it has been in general ridiculed as an idle and ignorant slander, and yet an explanation, complete and unanswerable, can readily enough be given.

To any one who has enjoyed the opportunity of placing side by side the folio of Luther's German Testament, printed in September, 1522, and the quarto of Tyndale, printed in September, 1525, the whole matter is clear at a glance. Tyndale's New Testament is Luther's in miniature; the general appearance of the page is the same; the arrangement of the text is the same; and the appropriation of the margins, the inner one for parallel passages, and the outer for *glosses*, is also the same. Still further, what is of far more importance, although it is now for the first time indicated,[1] the marginal notes, those "*pestilent glosses*," against which the indignation of the clergy was especially excited, have been to a large extent translated by Tyndale from those of Luther. Not that Tyndale translated like a servile imitator, whose intellect was too barren to be capable of originality; everywhere he uses his own judgment; sometimes he curtails Luther's notes; sometimes he omits them; often he inserts notes of his own, and these of various kinds, explanatory and doctrinal. Some of the longest of these marginal glosses, as well as some of those which most emphatically propound the doctrine of justification by faith, are original to Tyndale; in other cases the words of Luther have been expanded, and have formed not so much the source of Tyndale's note as the nucleus out of which it has grown. Of the whole number of *ninety* marginal glosses which occur in the fragment of Tyndale's quarto that has come down to us, *fifty-two* have been more or less literally taken from Luther, and *thirty-eight* are original; and, if we suppose that the same proportion existed throughout the whole of the work, then it may be admitted, that the customary allegation that he "translated

[1] I leave these words in the text, because, although Mr. Arber has anticipated me in print, my researches were completed long before his book appeared.

Luther's New Testament," while intended doubtless to attach opprobrium to the book, has also a sufficiently specious foundation to rest upon.[1]

Enough has been said on this point to show that in thus dealing with Luther's glosses, Tyndale acted not as a mere feeble copyist, unable to walk alone, but as an independent scholar, thinking and judging for himself, even when borrowing from another. It were alike base and foolish to defend his originality at the expense of truth; and those who impartially weigh all the circumstances of the case, will probably not think it any serious derogation from Tyndale's merits to believe, that living at Wittemberg, and following in the footsteps of Luther as a translator, he had come largely under the influence of that great master-mind of the age. The same explanation may be applied with equal justice to the prologue which Tyndale has prefixed to his translation, and in which many passages have been borrowed from Luther, as the reader speedily begins to suspect from the characteristic ring of the sentences.

When, however, we pass from these, which are mere appendages to the work, to the text of the translation, then the genuine originality and independence of Tyndale at once become conspicuous. In the very first verse of his translation he varies from that predecessor whom he is said to have implicitly followed; and he manifests the same independence throughout. Not that he translates without any regard to the labours of those who had preceded him in the work; it would be a small compliment to his good sense to believe that he undertook a labour of so much importance without availing himself of all materials that could in any way contribute to the successful completion of his task. Indeed, it is obvious to any one, who has sufficient scholarship to compare the various works, that, as he proceeded in his undertaking, Tyndale had before him the Vulgate, the Latin version of Erasmus, and

[1] I need not point out how completely what has been said disposes of the assertion of Anderson, that Tyndale did not know German.

the German of Luther, and that in rendering from the original Greek he carefully consulted all these aids; but he did so not with the helpless imbecility of a mere tyro, but with the conscious independence of an accomplished scholar. He consulted those who had preceded him, as a modern classical critic consults the scholiasts and commentators who have laboured on the same work: and the imputation of servility or ignorance is as baseless in the one case as in the other. It is no derogation from the originality of any modern German editor of Virgil or Sophocles that we can trace in his writings the influence of previous editors; and equally it is no derogation from the independence of Tyndale's version that we can trace in it the influence of previous translators.

To a scholar, the most convincing proof of what has now been asserted is that which arises from the actual comparison of Tyndale's work with the original Greek, and with the versions which unquestionably lay open before him as he proceeded in his work;[1] but to the general reader perhaps, the most satisfactory demonstration that can be given of the superlative merit of Tyndale's work, is the fact that the English New Testament, as we now have it, is, in its substance, the unchanged language of Tyndale's first version. The English Bible has been subjected to repeated revisions; the scholarship of generations, better provided than Tyndale was with critical apparatus, has been brought to bear upon it; writers, by no means over-friendly to the original translator, have had it in their power to disparage and displace his work; yet, in spite of all these influences, that Book, to which all Englishmen turn as the source, and the guide, and the stay of their spiritual life, is still substantially the translation of Tyndale. And most emphatically may it be said of those passages of the New Testament which are most intimately associated with our deepest religious emotions, that it is the actual unchanged words of the original translator which are

[1] On this point it may suffice to refer the reader to the excellent summary of Westcott, in his *History of the English Bible*, pp. 172–212.

treasured up in our hearts, and are so potent in impressing the soul.

Mr. Froude has said, with equal eloquence and truth, "Of the translation itself, though since that time it has been many times revised and altered, we may say that it is substantially the Bible with which we are all familiar. The peculiar genius—if such a word may be permitted—which breathes through it, the mingled tenderness and majesty, the Saxon simplicity, the preternatural grandeur, unequalled, unapproached in the attempted improvements of modern scholars, all are here, and bear the impress of the mind of one man—William Tyndale."[1] Of the truth of what may seem an overcharged panegyric, the reader will himself be able to judge from the following specimens, selected, not because in them Tyndale has exhibited any special care, but because they are amongst the most impressive and the most familiar of the words of Holy Writ. To enable the reader to perceive at a glance how true it is that our present version is substantially that of Tyndale, in the following passages what is still retained of Tyndale's work is printed in Roman characters, and what has been changed in *Italic*.[2]

I.—ST. MATTHEW VII. vv. 7–20.

7 Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you:

8 For *whosoever* asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

9 Is there *any* man *among* you *which would proffer* his son a stone if he *asked him* bread?

10 Or if he asked fish *would he proffer* him a serpent?

11 If ye then *which are* evil, *can* give *to* your children good gifts, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask of him?

12 Therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, even so do ye to them: this is the law and the prophets.

13 Enter in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

[1] Froude's *History of England*, Vol. III. p. 84.

[2] In these extracts the spelling is reduced to the modern standard, but no word has been otherwise altered; the first is taken from the Grenville fragment.

14 *For* strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

15 Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheeps' clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of *briars?*

17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth *bad* fruit, *nor yet* a *bad* tree can bring forth good fruit.

19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit *shall be* hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

II.—St. John XVII. vv. 1—11.

1 These words spake Jesus and lift up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee.

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

3 This is life eternal, that they might know thee *that* only *very* God, and whom thou hast sent Jesus Christ.

4 I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work*s* which thou gavest me to do.

5 And now glorify me *thou* Father *in thine own presence,*[1] with the glory which I had with thee *ere* the world was.

6 I have *declared* thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou *hast given* them me, and they have kept thy *sayings*.

7 Now have they known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and have believed that thou didst send me.

9 I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine.

10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them.

11 And now am I no more in the world, but *they* are in the world, and I come to thee: Holy Father, keep *in* thine own name *them* which thou hast given me that they may be one as we are.

III.—St. Luke XV. vv. 11—24.

11 A certain man had two sons:

12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me *my part* of *the* goods that to me *belongeth*. And he divided unto them his *substance*.

[1] In his subsequent revision of the New Testament, Tyndale altered this into—*with thine own self*, which is the language of our present version.

13 And not *long* after, the younger son gathered all *that he had* together, and took his journey into a far country, and there *he* wasted his goods with riotous living.

14 And when he had spent all *that he had*, there rose a *great dearth throughout* all that *same* land: and he began to *lack*.

15 And he went and *clave* to a citizen of that same country, *which* sent him *to the* field to *keep his* swine.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the *cods*[1] that the swine *ate;* and no man gave him.

17 *Then* he *remembered* himself[2] *and* said, How many hired servants *at* my father's have bread enough, and I *die for* hunger.

18 I will arise and go to my father and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee.

19 Nor am I not worthy[3] to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants.

20 And he arose and came to his father. When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion *on him*, and ran *unto him*,[4] and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, *neither* am I worthy *henceforth*[5] to be called thy son.

22 *Then* said the father to his servants, Bring forth *that* best garment and put it on him: and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet.

23 And bring hither *that* fatted calf, and kill *him*, and let us eat and be merry:

24 For this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is *now* found.

These passages, which have been selected exclusively on the ground of their being amongst the most familiar and most beautiful in the New Testament, will suffice to show how true it is that our Authorised Version is substantially the version of Tyndale. Larger specimens would only confirm the conclusion: it has been found, for example, by actual examination that nine-tenths of the First Epistle of St. John, as we now have it, are retained from Tyndale, and even in the difficult Epistle to the Ephesians, five-sixths are Tyndale's; and similar proportions obtain throughout the whole volume. In short, the English New Testament as we now have it is, in its sub-

[1] *i.e.*, shell or husk, as in peascod.

[2] In Tyndale's later version, *Then he came to himself*, as in the Authorised Version.

[3] In Tyndale's revision, *and am no more worthy;* so also in verse 21.

[4] The superfluous words, *on him* and *unto him*, were omitted in Tyndale's revision.

[5] See note *supra*.

The fyrſt piſtle off S. Peter the Apoſtle.

The fyrſt Chapter.

Peter an Apoſtle of Jeſu Chriſt/ to the that dwell here and there as ſtraungers thorowe out/ Pontus/ Galacia/ Capadocia/ Aſia/ and Bethinia/ elect by the foreknowledge off God the father/ thorowe the ſanctifyinge off the ſpirite/ vnto obedience and ſprynklynge of the bloud off Jeſus Chriſt. Grace be with you/ and peace be multiplied.

Bleſſed be God the father off oure lorde Jeſus Chriſt/ which thorowe his aboundant mercie begat vs agayne vnto a lively hope/ by the reſurrecion off Jeſus Chriſt from deeth/ to enioye an inheritaunce immortall/ and vndefiled/ and that putrifieth not/ reſerved in heven for you which are kept by the power off god thorowe fayth/ vnto helth/ which health is prepared all redy to be ſhewed in the laſt tyme/ in the which tyme ye ſhall reioyce/ though nowe for a ſeaſon (iff nede requyre) ye are in hevines/ throwe manyfolde temptacions/ that youre fayth once tried beynge moche more precious then golde that perisſheth (though it be tried wyth fyre) myght be founde vnto lawde/ glory/ and honowre/ when Jeſus Chriſt ſhall apere/ whom ye have not ſene

stance and form, the work of Tyndale; no other man has left any trace of his individuality upon it.[1]

Even this does not fully represent Tyndale's influence on our present version. Not only is the great bulk of it still in his own unchanged words, but what changes have been made, have been, perhaps unconsciously, dictated by the spirit of Tyndale. All subsequent revisions have been made in accordance with that type or standard which Tyndale had fixed, and which three centuries have concurred in unanimously recognising as the true ideal of the language appropriate to that sacred volume in which God speaks to men. Even as a literary work the issue of Tyndale's translation forms an important era in our history. At a time when the English language was still unformed; when it had not as yet been the vehicle of any great literary undertaking; when men of learning still looked upon it as an imperfect instrument, fit only for commonplace purposes, Tyndale showed that its capacity was unbounded; that in simplicity, majesty, strength, musical flow, ability to relate gracefully and perspicuously, to touch the feelings, to awe by its solemnity, to express the highest truths in the clearest words, it yields to no language ancient or modern. This is not the place to dilate upon the mere literary merits and benefits of Tyndale's version; but we may be allowed to remark that, in thus holding up before the nation, in a book which has become sanctified by the reverence of ten generations, a model of the highest literary excellence, simple, honest, and manly; free alike from the pedantry of the verbal scholar, and the affected point and force of the mere man of letters, he has exercised a permanent influence of the most beneficial kind over the literary taste of the English people. When to this we add, or endeavour in imagination to add, the thousandfold higher and nobler purposes which his book has so effectually promoted (and what imagination can conceive them, what pen could worthily describe them?) shall we hesitate to say that as it was the

[1] See Westcott, p. 211, note.

consciousness of the will of God that prompted him to his noble task, so he was not without the aid of the Spirit of God in its accomplishment?

Tyndale put forward no claim that his work should be considered either infallible or immaculate. He had honestly and diligently striven to do his task as well as he could; but the whole had been finished in little more than a single year (for we cannot suppose that he had done much more in London than simply weigh the matter well and decide upon the best form of translation), and he was well aware that his work might be susceptible of improvement. He himself, in the noble address to the reader, subjoined to his octavo version, promised to revise and amend his translation if opportunity and leisure were vouchsafed to him; and so far from deprecating criticism he invited the learned to contribute their aid towards improving what was amiss. At the present time, when the question of revision is discussed with, perhaps, somewhat more zeal than discretion, Tyndale's words will be received with hearty approbation by all who have dispassionately considered the subject:—

"Them that are learned Christianly, I beseech (for as much as I am sure, and my conscience beareth me record, that of a pure intent, singly and faithfully I have interpreted it, as far forth as God gave me the gift of knowledge and understanding) that the rudeness of the work now at the first time, offend them not; but that they consider how that I had no man to counterfeit, neither was holp with English of any that had interpreted the same, or such like thing in the Scripture before time. Moreover, even very necessity and cumbrance (God is record) above strength, which I will not rehearse, lest we should seem to boast ourselves, [alluding, no doubt, to the interruption at Cologne,] caused that many things are lacking, which necessarily are required. Count it as a thing not having his full shape, but as it were born afore his time, even as a thing begun rather than finished. In time to come (if God have appointed us thereunto), we will give it his full

shape; and put out, if aught be added superfluously; and add to, if aught be overseen through negligence; and will enforce to bring to compendiousness that which is now translated at the length, and to give light where it is required, and to seek in certain places more proper English, and with a table to expound the words which are not commonly used, and show how the Scripture useth many words which are otherwise understood of the common people; and to help with a declaration where one tongue taketh not another; and will endeavour ourselves, as it were, to seethe it better, and to make it more apt for the weak stomachs; desiring them that are learned, and able, to remember their duty, and to help thereunto, and to bestow unto the edifying of Christ's body (which is the congregation of them that believe) those gifts which they have received of God for the same purpose. The grace that cometh of Christ be with them that love Him. Pray for us."[1]

And even more emphatic is the translator's declaration, in the opening sentences of that prologue which was prefixed to the edition interrupted at Cologne, and which may be supposed to express his more deliberate judgment, as it was written with more care than the short and hurried note which accompanied the octavo printed by Schoeffer:—

"I have here translated, brethren and sisters most dear and tenderly beloved in Christ, the New Testament for your spiritual edifying, consolation and solace; exhorting instantly and beseeching those that are better seen in the tongues than I, and that have higher gifts of grace to interpret the sense of the Scripture and meaning of the Spirit than I, to consider and ponder my labour, and that with the spirit of meekness. And if they perceive in any places that I have not attained the very sense of the tongue, or meaning of the Scripture, or have not given the right English word, that they put to their hands to amend it, remembering that so is their duty to do. For we have not received the gifts of God for ourselves only,

[1] From Mr. Fry's facsimile, the spelling being modernised.

or for to hide them; but for to bestow them unto the honouring of God and Christ, and edifying of the congregation, which is the body of Christ."[1]

Tyndale's life was not a long one, but he was spared to accomplish as much, perhaps, as was then possible, of that revision and improvement of his translation, which he so cordially recommends to all men of learning. From such a revision, conducted in the spirit which the first translator has described, no possible harm, nothing but good can result; and any revision, conducted in a different spirit, animated by the mere love of change, or by the foibles of grammatical pedantry, will meet only with the universal scorn of all English-speaking people.

[1] From the Grenville fragment: spelling modernised.

CHAPTER VI.

TYNDALE'S LIFE AT WORMS: RECEPTION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IN ENGLAND: LITERARY LABOURS: HOSTILITY OF WOLSEY.

A.D. 1525–1527.

IT was, as we formerly saw, about the month of October, 1525, when Tyndale, driven from Cologne, took up his abode in Worms; and here, so far as we know, he remained for nearly two years, till renewed violence compelled him once more to seek safety in flight. The same mystery, however, as before, continues to shroud all his movements; and his history is still conversant not with the man but with his work. Of the personal incidents which make up the staple of most biographies we have few, indeed, to relate; Tyndale was like one of the ancient prophets whom men seldom saw, whose way of life was little known, but whose voice seemed to pervade all the nation. He had left England some eighteen months before, unnoticed and unknown; yet a few months, and his words were scattered far and wide through his native land; and Henry and his prelates began to recognise in this unknown exile the most formidable of all the opponents of their religious system.

For some months after his arrival at Worms he was, of course, busily engaged in superintending the issue of the two editions of the New Testament in quarto and octavo, both of which we suppose to have been printed there. It is not likely that this would be accomplished till February or March, 1526, at the very earliest; and the greater part of the summer would find Tyndale still busied in making arrange-

ments with merchants, English and foreign, for the rapid and secret transmission of the precious volumes to England. The customary anxiety of the author for the success of his work was, in Tyndale's case, exchanged for still more noble care lest a work which had been finished with so much difficulty should, from any want of precaution, fail altogether in reaching its destination. He must have suspected—perhaps, indeed, he knew—that Cochloeus had disclosed his designs to the authorities in England, who would, therefore, be on the alert to seize his New Testaments; and it was accordingly necessary to devise precautions for eluding the vigilance of his enemies. With what success this was accomplished we shall presently see; meantime some attempt must be made to arrange the few fragmentary notices that have floated down to us of his life at Worms. These are of the most meagre description, scarcely affording us even a passing glimpse of the life of Tyndale.

One of the earliest incidents of his residence at Worms has been already alluded to, his final separation from his amanuensis, William Roye, whose indiscretion and insubordination Tyndale could no longer tolerate. As soon, therefore, as his great work was so far advanced that the assistance of Roye in writing and revision could be dispensed with, Tyndale gladly bade farewell to a troublesome companion whose restlessness and total want of all self-restraint were in the last degree unfavourable to an undertaking that needed to be conducted in silence and secrecy. Tyndale's precaution in getting quit of so dangerous an associate was by no means uncalled for; his own conduct in venturing to publish the New Testament in English was quite enough to excite the ecclesiastical authorities against him; but in the eyes of Wolsey it was a far more serious offence that he was supposed to be associated with Roye in the production of his satirical rhymes; and, indeed, it was in consequence of this groundless suspicion that he was compelled to abandon his refuge in Worms and seek safety elsewhere.

It was probably early in 1526, in February or March,[1] that Roye left Worms for Strasburg; but before his departure Tyndale had been visited by that distinguished scholar whose testimony to his acquirements as a linguist has already been cited. Herman Buschius found Tyndale residing at Worms with two other Englishmen, and it was doubtless as the result of his own interviews with the translator that the illustrious German spoke so highly of his acquirements in Greek, Hebrew, and other languages. It is not improbable that some correspondence continued to be maintained between Tyndale and Buschius; at all events, it is not unworthy of note that when Tyndale was compelled to leave Worms, he found a refuge in that university town of Marburg, where Buschius had also taken up his abode as Professor of Poetry and Eloquence. There can be no reasonable doubt that part of Tyndale's leisure at Worms was devoted to the study of Hebrew. He must have acquired some knowledge of that language before his arrival in the ancient Rhenish city, not improbably during his residence in Wittemberg; but Worms with its colony of Jews, and its ancient synagogue, established, according to tradition, shortly after the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, would doubtless possess teachers, from whose instructions Tyndale might acquire that mastery of the Hebrew tongue which he exhibited in his translation of the Old Testament.

For some time even after the New Testament was circulating in England, Tyndale was unknown by name to the authorities as the translator; his abiding-place was, however, well enough known to some faithful friends, from whom he received assistance, and with whom he maintained regular communication. Both in England and Scotland there were many who had imbibed the opinions of Luther, and to whom their native land was no longer a safe

[1] Anderson makes him leave in the "summer of 1525" (*Annals*, I. p. 138), although it is certain that Roye was the person who was with Tyndale at Cologne, and also that neither of them left that city till after September, when the work, so far from being finished, was not yet begun.

home. These men naturally looked to Germany as their appropriate shelter; and had no difficulty in ascertaining from merchants friendly to their cause, where previous exiles from the shores of England were already settled. For many years a constant stream of refugees of all classes, but mainly priests and friars, passed from England to Germany, directing their course chiefly to such cities as Wittemberg and Strasburg; and from them Tyndale learned how affairs were proceeding in that dear land, which, though an exile, he never ceased to love as his home with all the warmth of a patriot's affection. Roye was not the only friend with Tyndale at the time of the visit of Buschius;[1] and friends were not unfrequently passing through Worms. About a year after Roye had left him, in the spring, therefore, of 1527, another Observant friar from the same monastery at Greenwich to which Roye belonged, passed through Worms on his way to Strasburg. This was, to use Tyndale's own words, "One Jerome, a brother of Greenwich also [as well as Roye], saying that he intended to be Christ's disciple another while, and to keep, as nigh as God would give him grace, the profession of his baptism, and to get his living with his hands, and to live no longer idly, and of the sweat and labour of those captives which they had taught not to believe in Christ, but in cut shoes and russet coats [the dress of the Observants]. Which Jerome with all diligence I warned of Roye's boldness, and exhorted him to beware of him, and to walk quietly and with all patience and long-suffering; according as we have Christ and His apostles for an example; which thing he also promised me. Nevertheless, when he was come to Argentine [Strasburg], William Roye, whose tongue is able not only to make fools stark mad, but also to deceive the wisest (that is, at the first sight and acquaintance), gat him to him, and set

[1] The time of the visit of Buschius can only be fixed approximately: it is entered in Spalatin's diary as the day after St. Laurence's day, *i.e.*, August 11, 1526; but this was the date of the conversation of Buschius with Spalatin, and his visit to Worms had, of course, preceded it. See Schelhorn, *Amœnitates Literariæ*, Vol. IV. p. 431.

him a-work to make rhymes, while he himself translated a dialogue out of Latin into English, in whose prologue he promiseth more a great deal than, I fear me, he will ever pay. Paul saith (2 Tim. ii.), 'The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be peaceable unto all men, and ready to teach, and one that can suffer the evil with meekness, and that can inform them that resist, if God at any time will give them repentance for to know the truth.' It becometh not, then, the Lord's servant to use railing rhymes, but God's Word; which is the right weapon to slay sin, vice, and all iniquity."[1]

Of these "railing rhymes," which were, in truth, a pungent and most offensive satire upon Cardinal Wolsey, we shall have to speak more fully in a subsequent part of this chapter; meantime, however, as Tyndale had been accused of possessing a fierce and quarrelsome disposition, which rendered it impossible for any one long to remain his friend, it may here be remarked that Roye's satire is so coarse and violent as to furnish the most complete justification of Tyndale's procedure in getting rid of so troublesome a companion. The biographer of Tyndale, however, owes something even to these licentious lines of Roye, as they throw considerable light upon various transactions of which no other record appears to exist.

It seems well ascertained that before the close of 1526 Tyndale printed at Worms, or possibly at Strasburg, his famous *Prologue to the Epistle to the Romans*. No copy, indeed, exists of this book in a separate state; but this is not surprising when the diligent search after Tyndale's writings is borne in mind; and there are references to its existence and circulation as a separate treatise sufficient to establish its publication as well as to assign it to the year 1526. Dr. Ridley, writing in February, 1527,[2] speaks of the *Introduction to the Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, by Tyndale and Roye, as

[1] Tyndale, Preface to *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon*.

[2] See Anderson's *Annals*, Vol. I. p. 153. I believe, on the whole, that Anderson is right in assigning this letter to 1527; the original is in the Cotton Library: *Cleopatra*, E. V.

then in existence, and condemns it as full of the "most poisoned and abominable heresies that can be thought." And Sir Thomas More, in the Preface to his *Confutation*, likewise mentions the "Introduction" as a separate treatise, which he too condemns as "bringing the readers into a false understanding of St. Paul."[1]

Nothing could show more strikingly than this work the great ascendency which the German Reformer had now obtained over the mind of Tyndale. The "Introduction to the Romans" is in truth hardly an original work, but is much more correctly described as a translation or paraphrase of Luther's Preface to the same Epistle. Luther's work, originally in German, had been translated into Latin by Justus Jonas in 1523; and it is evident on examination that Tyndale used both the German and the Latin copies.[2] A thoroughly competent critic has shown that sometimes Tyndale employs expressions which occur in Luther's original German, but for which there is no precise equivalent in the Latin; and that sometimes he borrows phrases from the Latin to which there is nothing that exactly corresponds in the German original. Yet even while acting in the main as a mere translator of the work of his great contemporary, Tyndale was not content to sink entirely his own individuality and to be the echo of another. He uses his own judgment in the selection from the two versions of the most suitable phraseology; and where the subject seemed to have been imperfectly elucidated by Luther he makes further expositions of his own, and has added at the close a brief but clear summary of the whole argument, both of Luther's Preface and of St. Paul's Epistle. If, however, the little treatise cannot be cited as adding much to Tyndale's reputation as an original author, it was accepted by his countrymen as a most valuable contribution towards instructing them in the right understanding of the Holy Scriptures; and the vehemence

[1] Sir Thomas More's *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer.*

[2] Westcott, *History of the English Bible*, pp. 194, 195; where passages are quoted in proof of Tyndale's use both of the German and Latin.

with which it was denounced by the adherents of the teaching of the Church, may be regarded as no unfair criterion of its value in the eyes of the English Reformers.

Like his translation of the New Testament, his Introduction was issued anonymously; and both were no doubt disposed of in the customary way; Tyndale himself being in the habit of repairing to the great fairs at Frankfort, where he met merchants from England and from Antwerp, through whose energy and skill the forbidden works were clandestinely conveyed to Britain, and widely circulated long before they came to the knowledge of the authorities.

A complete and trustworthy chronicle of the early circulation of Tyndale's New Testament in England is still one of the great desiderata in our literature. Some slight sketch, however, must here be attempted as a necessary part of this biography, without which, indeed, the story of Tyndale's life would be incomplete, and almost unintelligible. To the reader who is acquainted with Anderson's *Annals of the English Bible*, it may, perhaps, appear superfluous to do anything more than merely cite from his voluminous details the portion which belongs to this part of our subject; but in truth that writer has been unfortunately so completely mistaken in his history of the first introduction of the New Testament into England, that one necessary step towards any true narrative is to dismiss from our minds what he has written on the matter.[1]

It is impossible to say *when* Tyndale's New Testament first reached England. We have seen reason to believe that it could scarcely have been before the spring of 1526; and the earliest notice we have of its existence in England confirms this supposition. John Pykas of Colchester was examined on the 7th of March, 1528, before Tunstal, in the chapel of that palace where Tyndale had in vain solicited the bishop's patronage; and amongst other things he confessed that "*about a two years last past* he bought in Colchester, of a Lombard

[1] See the whole matter discussed in Appendix A.

of London, *a New Testament in English*, and paid for it four shillings, which New Testament he kept, and read it through many times."[1] The date thus somewhat vaguely indicated may with little hesitation be assigned to April or May, 1526; and there is no sufficient reason for believing that the New Testaments were introduced much earlier than this. For some time they continued to circulate in secret without attracting the notice of the authorities, in spite of the warning which Rinck, and Lee, and above all Cochloeus, had conveyed.

When or *how* the authorities became aware that these forbidden books were actually in circulation still remains undiscovered; but it is quite certain that none of Tyndale's New Testaments were amongst the basketfuls of Lutheran works which were consumed at Barnes's recantation, February 11th, 1526, for the obvious reason that none of them had yet reached England. During the course of the summer, however, some copy, apparently of the quarto, with glosses, seems to have fallen into the hands of one of the bishops; and forthwith steps were devised for undoing the mischief which had thus, as they believed, been introduced amongst the people. Curiously enough we are indebted for the most detailed account of these proceedings to Tyndale's discarded amanuensis, William Roye, who has given us, in the uncouth and "railing rhymes" of that very satire which Tyndale has so severely condemned, a connected narrative of the whole transaction.

According to Roye, it was Standish, Bishop of St. Asaph, whom he represents as a liar and a gambler, who brought the matter under the notice of Wolsey. Several of the principal prelates were immediately summoned, under the presidency of the cardinal, to deliberate upon the course of conduct which they ought to pursue. Wolsey, with his customary liberality, and his shrewd appreciation of the urgent necessity of a Reformation, is said to have expressed himself on the matter in the words of Pilate, "I find no fault therein;" but

[1] Harleian MSS., 421.

such a policy found no adherents in that audience. Tunstal urged a stringent prohibition of the book; and it was resolved with unanimous consent that the English New Testament should be publicly burned wherever it was discovered.[1] Roye was, of course, deeply interested in the work in which he had himself been so intimately concerned; he enjoyed many opportunities of communication with England; and his statements may be accepted as probably, in the main, correct. They are certainly corroborated by everything else that has been recorded. Thus Henry, in the preface to his English translation of his reply to Luther's letter, after specifying as an aggravation of Luther's guilt that he had fallen "into device with one or two lewd persons, born in this our realm, for the translating of the New Testament into English, as well with many corruptions of that holy text, as certain *prefaces* and other pestilent *glosses in the margin*," proceeds to inform his "dearly-beloved people" that out of his "special tender zeal towards them" he had "with the deliberate advice of the most reverend father in God, Thomas Lord Cardinal, Legate *de latere* of the See Apostolic, Archbishop of York, Primate and Chancellor of this realm, and other reverend fathers of the spirituality, determined the said and untrue *translations to be burned*."[2]

It was probably the end of August or the beginning of September, 1526, when this conclave of bishops deliberated as to the appropriate treatment of the Word of God in the English language; and their resolution was not allowed to lie long inoperative. It was determined to mark unmistakably their judgment regarding the circulation of the English New Testament by one of those public displays of which the age was so fond. Tunstal was appointed to preach at Paul's Cross, and denounce the work as replete with errors and dangerous heresies; and at the conclusion of his sermon the condemned

[1] See Roye's *Rede me and be not wrothe*, Arber's reprint.

[2] See the Preface in Dibdin's *Typographical Antiquities*, Vol. II. p. 488; see also Appendix A.

book was publicly thrown into the flames.[1] The reader may not disdain to read the account of the transaction in Roye's rhymes:—

JEFFRAY.[2] Did'st thou not hear what villany
They did unto the Gospel?
WATKINS. Why? did they against him [it] conspire?
JEFFRAY. By my troth they set him a-fire
Openly in London city.
WATKINS. Who caused it so to be done?
JEFFRAY. In sooth, the Bishop of London,
With the Cardinal's authority;
Which at Paul's Cross earnestly
Denounced it to be heresy,
That the Gospel should come to light:
Calling them heretics execrable
Which caused the Gospel venerable
To come unto laymen's sight.
He declared there in his furiousness
That he found errors more and less
Above three thousand in the translation.
Howbeit, when all came to pass,
I dare say unable he was
Of one error to make probation.[3]

Rumour soon disseminated the fame of Tunstal's sermon all over Europe; it certainly accomplished its end in attracting public notice, though whether this was any gain to him and his brethren may well be doubted. It was frequently remarked that the smoke of the fires which consumed the martyrs seemed to infect all upon whom it blew; and the sermon of Tunstal seems to have convinced many of his hearers, not of the truth, but of the falsehood and weakness of his position. "Men mutter among themselves," says the spokesman in More's *Dialogue*, "that the book was not only faultless, but very well translated, and was devised to be burnt because men

[1] A letter written by one John Sadler, to Harman, the Antwerp merchant, arrested for circulating the New Testaments, and dated September 3, 1526, states that "the news in England was that the English New Testaments should be put down and burnt:" the burning therefore was subsequent to September 3.

[2] Jeffray and Watkins are the interlocutors in the poem which, in Roye's rough language, was supposed to be "made by a belly beast engendered among the greasy or anointed heap, otherwise called the papistical sect."

[3] Arber's reprint, p. 46.

should not be able to prove that such faults as were at Paul's Cross declared to have been found in it, were never found there indeed, but untruly surmised." What the nature of the charges against Tyndale's translation may have been we can only conjecture; probably they were not unlike those subsequently urged by Sir Thomas More; and some of them were, in all likelihood, captious and trifling enough; "there is not so much as one *i* therein," says Tyndale, "if it lack a tittle over his head, but they have noted it, and number it unto the ignorant people for an heresy."[1]

The sermon at Paul's Cross was not the only exhibition of Tunstal's hostility. On the 24th of October of the same year, 1526, he issued an injunction in which he speaks of the English New Testament as the work of "many children of iniquity, maintainers of Luther's sect, blinded through extreme wickedness, wandering from the way of truth and the Catholic faith," and asserts that they had "craftily translated the New Testament into our English tongue, intermingling therewith many heretical articles and erroneous opinions, seducing the simple people, attempting by their wicked and perverse interpretations to profane the majesty of the Scripture, which hitherto hath remained undefiled, and craftily to abuse the most holy Word of God." These books "containing most pernicious poison," he had discovered, were widely dispersed throughout his diocese, in great numbers, "some with glosses and some without;" and he accordingly enjoined his archdeacons to warn all that lived in the diocese of London to deliver up their English Testaments to his Vicar-general under pain of excommunication.[2] A similar mandate was issued by Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, on the 3rd of November:[3] such was

[1] Preface to *The Pentateuch*: Tyndale's *Works*, Vol. I. p. 393.

[2] See Foxe. It is not easy to decide whether the sermon or the prohibition came first; possibly the sermon, for a letter from Campeggio, dated Rome, November 21, refers to the burning of the Bible as then known at Rome, which was quite a month's ordinary journey from London. Campeggio states that he "has heard with pleasure of the burning of the translation of the Bible: *no holocaust could be more pleasing to God.*" Cotton, *Vitellius*, B. VIII.

[3] Wilkins' *Concilia*, Vol. III. p. 706.

the reception which the Word of God in the native English language experienced at the hands of those who claimed to be the spiritual guides and overseers of the people.

It will not have escaped the notice of the reader that these denunciations of the New Testament do not contain any mention of Tyndale as the translator, but ascribe the work vaguely to "children of iniquity, servants of the Lutheran faction." It is not easy to say *when* the secret of the authorship of the anonymous work which so greatly troubled the bishops, first became known to the authorities in England. Tunstal was evidently unaware when he issued his injunction, that the book which he denounced so vehemently was the work of that unknown country scholar whom he had coldly repelled from his presence some years before; though it would almost appear as if he had discovered this when he preached at Paul's Cross. "When I heard my Lord of London preach at Paul's Cross," says our former friend, Humphrey Monmouth, "that Sir William Tyndale had translated the New Testament in English, and [that it] was naughtily translated, that was the first time that ever I suspected or knew any evil by him."[1] Monmouth, however, was in the secret of the authorship, and possibly it was his own private knowledge, and not the voice of the preacher, that added the translator's name.

It is, at all events, certain that about the close of 1526, it came to be known that Tyndale and Roye had been concerned in the production of the translation; and against them, accordingly, the vengeance of the authorities was afterwards specifically directed. How the secret was disclosed is not yet ascertained; but it seems a highly probable conjecture, that the sending of a special envoy to Cologne in the autumn, who resided for some months in that city, and was in daily communication with the former ally of Cochloeus, Sir Herman Rinck, may have led to the discovery of the actual authors, as

[1] Harleian MSS., 425.

their names could not but have been known to Quentel and others in Cologne.[1]

The earliest mention of Tyndale as the translator of the New Testament occurs in that letter of Robert Ridley which has been already referred to, and which is so curious that it may be given entire:—

"Master Golde, I heartily commend me unto you. As concerning this *common and vulgar translation of the New Testament done by Mr. William Hichyns, otherwise called Mr. W. Tyndale*, and Friar Roye, manifest Lutherans, heretics, and apostates, as doth openly appear, not only by their daily and continual company and familiarity with Luther and his disciples, but much more by their commentaries and annotations on Matthew and Mark in the first print, and also by their preface in the second print, and by their introduction into the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, altogether most poisoned and abominable heresies that can be thought. He is not a son of the Church that would receive a Gospel of such damned and precised [excommunicated] heretics, though it were true; like as Paul and our Saviour Christ would not take the true testimonial of evil spirits that praised Christ true, saying that He was the Son of God, and that Paul was the servant of the true God.[2] As for errors, if ye have the first print with annotations on Matthew and Mark, and the preface [*i.e.*, probably the prologue to the quarto] all is mere frenzy: he saith that 'the Gospel is nothing else but the sweet promise of grace,' so that by that means 'do penance' is no

[1] Sir John Wallop was sent to Cologne, where he arrived September 30; it was through him that Henry's letter to Luther was conveyed, November 30, to some of the German princes; Herman Rinck acted as his chief friend and confidential agent; and I feel certain, though I cannot prove it, that this was the channel through which the discovery came to the English authorities. Wallop's letters, which are preserved in the Cotton Manuscripts (*Galba*, B. IX), contain no statement on the point; but it might easily be communicated through the trusty servants whom he sent to Wolsey.

[2] Ridley's letter is a patched and piebald affair, filled with scraps of Latin from the Vulgate; these I give in English, so as not to interrupt the sense. Mr. Arber has printed it as it stands in the MS.

part of the Gospel; the *pater-noster* is no part of the Gospel; 'go ye cursed into everlasting fire,' no part of the Gospel; but only such [as] 'the kingdom of heaven is at hand,' 'ye shall find rest unto your souls.' Also he writeth in that preface and annotations that there is no difference between virginity [*i.e.*, the vow of chastity], and a whore of the stews if she come to repentance: also that like as no man doth evil to the intent that he should be punished or hanged therefor, so no man should do good to have any reward therefor, contrary to [the words of Scripture following, viz.], 'That thou mightest be justified when thou punishest,' and the assertion in the Epistle to the Hebrews concerning Moses, 'for he looked to the recompense, or the recompenser,' and to the passage, 'Make to yourselves friends of Mammon, that when ye shall fail they may receive you into eternal habitations.' Also [he saith] that by good works we do nothing merit, in opposition to the passage in Corinthians, 'That every one may receive according to his deeds, whether good or evil,' and to the words of Genesis spoken to Abraham, 'Because thou hast done this thing,' etc. [in blessing I will bless thee]; and also to the words of Matthew, 'Because I was athirst, and ye gave me drink,' etc., and 'Come ye blessed of my Father.' Also he saith that he that doth anything to have high place in heaven is proud as the Devil and Lucifer. *I have none of these books, but only I remember such things I read in the prefaces and annotations.*

"As for the text of the Gospel, first, the title is heretical, saying that it is print as it was written by the Evangelists,[1] although it agrees neither with the old version [*i.e.*, the Vulgate] nor that of Erasmus. 'This is the book of generation of Jesus, the Son of Abraham, and also the Son of David' [*i.e.*, Tyndale had translated it so, according to Ridley, whose memory had, however, failed him], whereas in the original it

[1] No title-page, either of the quarto or octavo, has been preserved, but probably it simply ran thus, "The New Testament as it was written by the Evangelists and Apostles."

is expressed absolutely [*i.e.*, *The book*, not *This is the book*]. . . *Voluit clam ab eâ divertere* [St. Matt. i. 17], he translates, '*he would have put her away:*' *in quo omnes peccaverunt* in the Epistle to the Romans [he translates], '*in so much that every man hath sinned:*' and, fool that he is, he translates *pœnitentiam agite* [Matt. iii. 2] *repent.* By this translation shall we lose all these Christian words, *penance*, *charity*, *confession*, *grace*, *priest*, *church*, which he alway calleth a *congregation*, as if there were no such thing as a congregation of Turks or beasts, or as if that, too, might be called a Church; *idolatry* calleth he worshipping of images. I would that ye should have seen my Lord's books [*i.e.*, Tunstal's copies of the Testament, which doubtless had all the mistakes marked in the margin].

"I certify you, if ye look well, ye shall not look three lines without fault in all the book; but I have not the book to mark them out; you should have had leisure yourself to have done it. Howbeit, it becometh the people of Christ to obey and follow their rulers which hath [*sic*] given study, and is learned in such matters as their people should hear and believe; they should not judge the doctrine of Paul nor of Paul's vicars and successors, but be judged by their learning as long as they know nothing contrary [to] God's laws."

Unable to restrain his indignation, Ridley returns again to the charge in a postscript:—

"Likewise the expression of Paul '*avoid foolish questions*,' is translated, 'beware of foolish problems or questions in the schools;' this was undoubtedly said out of hatred of the scholastic theology and the Universities. Such a thing is in the translation, though it be not in the same words. *Ego et pater unum sumus* [he translates] *we are one*, as if Christ said, *we are one person*, and not one substance or one thing. Show ye to the people that if any be of so proud and stubborn stomach that he will believe there is no fault nor error except it be declared [made clear] to him that he may see it, let him come hither to my Lord, which hath examined all, and he

shall see and hear errors, except that he be blind and have no eyes."[1]

As Ridley was one of Tunstal's chaplains, and high in the bishop's favour, we may not unnaturally conclude that he is here merely echoing the criticisms of his master; and that it was such renderings as those which he has condemned, that were paraded at St. Paul's Cross amongst the three thousand errors which Tunstal boasted of having discovered in Tyndale's New Testament.

The confession of Tunstal that the New Testaments were thick spread over all his diocese is the best proof of the success with which the merchants had accomplished their undertaking to convey the books in safety to England. For a time the distributors of the work eluded the authorities in a wonderful manner. Within half-a-mile of Tunstal's own palace, Barnes, even when a prisoner at large in Austin Friars, had New Testaments to sell; and a month before the issue of Tunstal's injunction he sold one of Tyndale's books to John Tyball for three shillings and twopence, making at the same time remarks about the New Testament in Latin being no better than "a cymbal tinkling and brass sounding," which would have filled his neighbour the Bishop of London with horror.[2]

In fact, the desire to possess the Word of God in the native language was so strong and so widely prevalent, that already enterprising printers began to perceive that it was a safe mercantile speculation to reprint Tyndale's translation; and before the close of 1526, Christopher of Endhoven, had prepared an edition at Antwerp for the supply of the eager demand for the New Testament which existed in England. Attempts were made by the English ambassador at the Court of the Princess Margaret, Regent of the Low Countries, to punish the printer, and to prevent any further importation of English New Testaments; but his efforts were to a large extent frustrated by the resolute conduct of the Lords of

[1] Cotton MSS., *Cleopatra*, E. v.

[2] Harleian MSS., 421.

Antwerp; and though he succeeded in seizing and burning some three hundred books, many more escaped his hands, and found their way in due course to London.[1] But though open violence had thus proved abortive, in the midst of a mercantile community jealous of its privileges as were the citizens of Antwerp, the English authorities did not desist from their efforts to arrest the introduction of New Testaments from the Low Countries. More subtle schemes were tried, and it was hoped that money might succeed where force had failed; and, accordingly, gigantic efforts were made to suppress entirely the hated work by purchasing all the copies abroad wherever they could be found. Warham expended nearly seventy pounds in this preposterous attempt; a prodigious sum, for which he may, probably, have received in return not many short of a thousand Testaments *with* glosses and *without;* but as Tyndale had printed six thousand at Worms, and Endhoven more than two thousand at Antwerp, Warham had not succeeded quite so well as he supposed, in what one bishop calls his "gracious and blessed deed, for which God should reward him hereafter."[2] Thus secure of purchasers, both amongst friends and enemies, the Dutch printers again reprinted the Testament,[3] and, in spite of Warham's extravagant expenditure, London was once more supplied with hundreds of the obnoxious volumes.

It is impossible to say at what precise time or in what exact manner the bishops first became aware of the agency through which England was thus supplied with Tyndale's New Testaments. It seems probable, however, that the secret in some way oozed out in consequence of what occurred at the trial of

[1] See the correspondence, which is very voluminous, in Cotton MSS., *Galba*, B. IX., or Anderson's *Annals*, Vol. I. p. 125, etc.

[2] Nix, Bishop of Norwich: see Anderson's *Annals*, Vol. I. p. 159.

[3] George Joye gives the following account of the two Dutch reprints: "The Dutch men got a copy, and printed it again in a small volume, adding the Kalendar in the beginning, concordances in the margent, and the table in the end.... After this they printed it again in a greater letter and volume, with the figures [illustrations] in the Apocalypse; of these two prints there were about five thousand books printed." George Joye's *Apology*, Arber's reprint, p. 20.

Bilney in November and December, 1527. Bilney defended himself with great ingenuity, and witnesses were summoned to prove that he had not preached against the teaching of the Church. One of these was Dr. Forman, Rector of All Hallows, in Honey Lane, who with his curate, Thomas Garret, and his servant, John Goodall, had for some time been occupied in purchasing and distributing prohibited books on a large scale. Whether or not the suspicions of the authorities were then roused, it is certain that in a very short time after the examination of Forman, Wolsey was in possession of the clue to the secret. No time was lost in following up the clue once discovered; Garret was seized; Oxford was searched; no fewer than three hundred and fifty-four volumes of prohibited works, including some of Tyndale's New Testaments, were found to have been lately introduced there; and Clark, Fryth, and others who had been implicated were arrested and imprisoned. The whole agency was discovered by the voluntary admissions of some of those who were then examined. Tunstal instituted a rigorous inquisition; and in a short time the extensive ramifications of the "brethren" in Essex and other parts of his diocese were brought to light; scores of simple country people, who had for some time been secretly rejoicing in that new treasure the Word of God in their native tongue, were summoned before the bishop or his official, and compelled to abjure; the merchants whose enterprise had introduced the condemned books were imprisoned, or forced to flee for safety; and for a time, doubtless, the circulation of the New Testament in England was sensibly arrested.[1]

Of these rigorous measures for hunting down the English New Testament, Wolsey was not so much the instigator, as the passive instrument in the hands of the prelates. This attitude of passive hostility was, however, exchanged for a feeling of bitter animosity by the appearance of those "railing

[1] The whole may be seen in Foxe, Vol. v., with the appended documents, which are very valuable, in the Religious Tract Society's edition: Strype's *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, Vol. I. Parts I. and II., etc., and Appendix A.

rhymes" which Roye and Jerome had concocted at Strasburg. The cardinal was not very seriously affected by attacks upon the doctrines and ritual of the Church; but he could not brook any reflections upon his own faults; and the satire, which bore on its very frontispiece the coarsest insinuations against him, stung him to the quick. The work appeared anonymously, and was at first attributed to Tyndale,[1] who had already suffered enough from his association with his troublesome companion, without being made responsible for his violent and offensive poetry. Tyndale took the earliest opportunity, therefore, of disclaiming all connection with Roye; and however desirous of "doing his good deeds secretly, and being content with the conscience [consciousness] of well-doing, and that God seeth us," he prefixed his own name to his next publication, that he might not be saddled with the offences of others. For a time, however, his disclaimer was not believed; and Wolsey, who was still in the plenitude of his power, and had agents willing to serve him at all hazards, was diligently endeavouring to ascertain the abiding-place of Tyndale and Roye, that he might, if possible, not only seize their books, but also get possession of their persons. Hackett, too, the envoy in the Low Countries, was indefatigable; but there were no laws of extradition in those days, and Wolsey's influence with the German emperor was on the wane; so that Tyndale had ample warning of his designs, and long before the cardinal had finished his inquiries, the translator had removed to a place of safety, where even Wolsey was powerless to annoy him.

At first it seems to have been supposed that Tyndale and Roye had gone to the Low Countries, and West, a priest of that order of friars to which Roye and Jerome belonged, was sent to track Tyndale and his associates. In a letter

[1] "'Who made that second book [the satire]?'" asks the interlocutor, in More's *Dialogue*. "'Forsooth,' quoth I, 'it appeareth not in the book; for the book is put forth nameless, and was in the beginning reckoned to be made by Tyndale; and whether it be so or not, we be not yet very sure.'" So writes Sir Thomas at the close of 1528.

dated from the convent of the Observants at Antwerp, September 2, 1528, he thus communicates his success to Hackett, the English envoy in the Low Countries:—

"I have spoken to Francis Byrkman, bookbinder of this town, and he tells me that Petygnell (*sic*), Roye and Jerome Barlowe, friars of our religion, and Hucthyns otherwise Tyndall, made the last book that was made against the King and my lord cardinal [Roye's *Rede me*, which, however, Tyndale had no hand in], and that John Schott, a printer of Strasburg, printed them. There is a whole pipe of them at Frankfort, and he desired me to write him a letter whether he should buy them or not. If so he intends to send Roye with the other two to Cologne to receive the money for the books, where I and Herman Ryng of Cologne shall take them."

This nicely concocted scheme, however, proved abortive, as the letter of the other conspirator Herman Rinck to Wolsey will show:—

"The letter of your Grace given to me by Master John West, priest of the Observant Order of St. Francis, written the 5th of August, at Hampton Court, in your Grace's palace, was sent and conveyed to me from Cologne to Frankfort in two days, by a speedy messenger, on the 21st of September, concerning the purchasing up everywhere books written in the English language, and *seizing Roye and Hutchins*. But they and their accomplices have not been seen at Frankfort since Easter [April 12] and the market next to Lent [February 26]; nor is it known where they have gone to, or whether they are alive or dead. And John Schott, a citizen of Strasburg, and their printer, declares that he does not know where they have disappeared to. Their books, however, are crammed with heresy, and full of envy and infamy against the magnificence and honour of your Grace; books which, very wickedly and contrary to Christian charity, render his royal highness, my most gracious lord, and most noble and illustrious prince, infamous to all worshippers of Christ. I, however, as your most humble, faithful, and diligent servant,

heard and understood, three weeks before the receipt of your Grace's letter, that those books had been pledged to the Jews at Frankfort for a sum of money, and I was then anxiously considering with myself how to obtain possession of them as soon as possible. John Schott, the printer, demanded, in addition to the interest that must be paid to the Jews, payment for his labour and the cost of the paper; and declared he would sell them to whoever offered most money; and therefore when your Grace sent the letter and the instructions to me from England, at once, as in duty bound, I spared neither person, nor money, nor pains; but I availed myself of the privilege formerly conferred by his imperial majesty; by gifts and presents I conciliated the consuls of Frankfort and several senators and judges, so that I might collect and gather together all those books from all quarters. This has been done in three or four places; so I hope that all the books of this kind which have been printed are in my possession, except two, which your Grace's agent, the aforesaid John West, requested and received of me for the greater benefit and advantage of the King and your Grace. And these books, but for my discovering and interposing, would have been packed into paper wrappers and concealed; and having been inclosed in ten hampers cunningly covered with flax, would have been in due time sent across the sea to England and Scotland, there to be sold simply as clean paper; but I believe that very few, if any, have been carried away or sold. Moreover, in the presence of the consuls of Frankfort, after exchange of oaths, I procured that the books should not be printed again; and the printer was bound by oath to send the original copy and manuscript of them to me.[1] Besides, I shall endeavour with the utmost care both to seize the foresaid Roye and Hutchins and other rebels against the King and your Grace, and to ascertain what places they frequent."

All this trouble and expense, he explains, he had willingly

[1] The manuscript is here illegible from the effects of fire; but the above is certainly the sense of the passage.

incurred in the service of Wolsey and Henry; hoping, however that some suitable reward would at a future time be bestowed upon him. He then enters into a detailed and somewhat unintelligible account of his public services since the year 1502, apparently intending to remind Wolsey that he had been of considerable assistance in securing for the King of England the right of searching through the whole German empire for traitors against his authority. This privilege, he suggests, might easily be obtained in even a more extended form from Charles V., so as to include not only traitors, but, still more, heretics. "Edmund de la Pole, who called himself Duke of Suffolk," he continues, "was demanded of King Philip, to be brought into England; and William Roye, William Tyndale, Jerome Barlow, Alexander Barclay, and their adherents,[1] formerly Franciscans of the Observant order, now apostates, also George Constans [Constantine], and many others who rail against your Grace, ought to be apprehended, punished, and delivered up, both in order to destroy the Lutheran heresy, and to confirm the Christian faith, as was exceedingly necessary in England." The full consideration of this most important matter, however, he leaves to Wolsey's superior wisdom; he himself undertaking, as soon as he received the necessary authority, to put it into force with all his energy. Again returning to what had happened at Frankfort, he once more supplies us with some further information concerning Tyndale. "In the presence of the consuls, judges, and senators of Frankfort, I compelled John Schott, the printer, on oath to confess how many books of that sort he had printed in the English, German, French, or any other language. And on taking the oath he acknowledged that he had only printed one thousand copies of six signatures, and in addition a thousand of nine signatures, in the English language, and this by the orders of Roye and Huchyns; who being in want of money were not able to pay for the books that were printed, and much

[1] Here a blank occurs in the MS., probably representing some other name, which Rinck at the moment had forgotten.

less to procure their being printed in other languages. Wherefore almost the whole of these books having been purchased by me are kept by me at my house in Cologne. Dated at Cologne, October 4, 1528."[1]

Rinck's narrative need not be implicitly received by us, either as to his own exploits or as to his version of the evidence given by the Strasburg printer; it affords us, however, an interesting and authentic glimpse of the dangers and annoyances amongst which Tyndale had to pursue his work. To the poverty of which the printer spoke to Rinck, Tyndale was no doubt occasionally exposed, notwithstanding the liberality of his friends in England; for the golden age of authorship had not yet dawned; Tyndale received no copy-money for that glorious work of his which no amount of money could ever have adequately rewarded, and had no doubt to guarantee the printer against any contingent loss.

In spite of Schott's confession, it is still considered doubtful whether any of Tyndale's works were printed at Strasburg;[2] the description given by the printer would, indeed, correspond sufficiently well to the size of *The Wicked Mammon*, or *The Prologue to the Romans;* but no copy of either book is in existence which has any claim whatever to have issued from Schott's press. In short, it seems certain that Rinck's information was somewhat stale and out of date; the co-partnership of Tyndale and Roye had been dissolved long before 1528; and Rinck, with all his indefatigable energy, had failed to strike upon the track of either of the offenders. Roye seems actually to have been in England at the very time when the Cologne senator was spurring in hot haste in search

[1] Cotton MSS., *Vitellius*, B. XXI. pp. 49, etc. The entire letter, which is in many parts extremely obscure, has been printed by Arber in his edition of the *Grenville Fragment*.

[2] Arber says the first edition of Roye's *Rede me* consists of *nine* signatures. This would be the book referred to by Schott. The other of six quires might be Roye's *Dialogue between the father and the son, inter patrem Christianum et filium contumacem*. This dialogue seems to be lost.

of him;[1] and Tyndale had in all probability found a quiet resting-place on the banks of the Lahn, nearly a year before Rinck had set out in quest of him.

The very names of the associates who are mentioned in Rinck's letter suffice to show that it was about Roye rather than Tyndale that he had succeeded in gaining information. Jerome Barlow, if, as seems natural, we suppose him to be the Jerome, a member of the same Observant Monastery at Greenwich to which Roye belonged,[2] whom Tyndale mentions in the Preface to his *Parable of the Wicked Mammon*, had left Worms in the beginning of 1527 to join Roye at Strasburg. Alexander Barclay, also, totally unknown as a friend of the Reformation, is the well-known author of an exceedingly clever sarcastic poem, *The Ship of Fools;* and this tendency, we may be sure, was not likely to recommend him as an associate of one who protested so emphatically as Tyndale did, against the impropriety of "using railing rhymes," instead of that Word of God which was, in his eyes, the only "right weapon to slay sin, vice, and all iniquity."

For the time, therefore, Tyndale had eluded his enemies; dangers, indeed, threatened him on every side, but his work was not yet done; he had still much to accomplish before the approach of that terrible end which, from the first, he foresaw to be in store for him.

[1] See a letter of West to Cromwell, *December* 17, 1528, Greenwich, in which he complains that he is not allowed to "come to London to seek for them that my lord knoweth of and to enquire *where Roye was, when he was in England with his mother*," etc. Cotton MSS. *Vitellius*, B. x. 171.

[2] West's letter, quoted on p. 160, makes it absolutely certain that Jerome Barlowe had been an Observant friar.

CHAPTER VII.

TYNDALE AT MARBURG; PUBLISHES "THE WICKED MAMMON," AND "THE OBEDIENCE OF A CHRISTIAN MAN."

A.D. 1528.

SOME fifty miles north of Frankfort, in the beautiful valley of the Lahn, that tributary which pours its waters into Father Rhine opposite Coblentz, the picturesque city of Marburg fringes the foot of an eminence whose summit is crowned by a venerable castle, the residence in Tyndale's time of the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel. Philip the Magnanimous, the Landgrave of that day, had been among the first of the German potentates to espouse the cause of the Reformation; and having thrown the whole vigour of his nature into the movement, he had acquired a position of great prominence amongst the Reformers, and might in 1528 almost be looked upon as sharing the responsibility of the leadership with Luther himself.

The Landgrave was commonly styled "the disciple of Melanchthon," that gentle Reformer having been mainly instrumental in inducing him to adopt the doctrines of the Reformation; but Philip the Magnanimous of Hesse-Cassel had not very much in common with Philip the Scholar of Wittemberg. He had already diverged from the opinions of Luther and Melanchthon, and had exhibited a very decided preference for the bolder and more sweeping views of Zwingle and the Swiss and French Reformers. In 1527, inspired with an eager desire to promote learning in his dominions, he founded a University in his quiet and somewhat secluded

capital, the earliest of the Universities to which the Reformation gave birth, and which, in spite of many vicissitudes, still continues to flourish.

At the same period, also, and probably in consequence of the Landgrave's patronage, Hans Luft established a printing-press in Marburg, whose productions, albeit by no means master-pieces of the typographic art, were for many years the favourite reading of the lovers of the Reformation in England, and are now of priceless estimation in the eyes of collectors. In short, under the protection of the young and enthusiastic Landgrave, Marburg had become one of the great centres from which the principles of the Reformation were vigorously propagated; and for a few years this great inland town, so little known to fame, that some historians of literature have written about "Marlborough in the land of Hesse," as if it were an entirely mythical locality,[1] divided public interest with Wittemberg, Speyers, and the other great cities of the Empire.

Nowhere was the Reformation more thoroughly carried out, or the doctrines of the Reformers more rigorously pushed to their logical conclusion. All practices that savoured of idolatry or superstition were retrenched; the old-established constitution of the Church was abolished, and was reconstructed from the very foundations, modelled after a pattern of democratic simplicity, suggested by the clear-headed Frenchman, the famous Francis Lambert, of Avignon, who was entrusted with chief authority in ecclesiastical matters. This reconstruction, moreover, was carried out with a consistency which was then certainly without parallel in any of the Churches of the Reformation,[2] in accordance with Lambert's favourite maxim, "Whatever is deformed must be reformed."

Into this quiet resting-place, undisturbed as yet by any of those unfortunate tendencies which afterwards made Marburg and its Landgrave unhappily notorious, Tyndale had come

[1] [See a curious passage in Dr. Mombert's *William Tyndale's Five Books of Moses*, pp. xxix. to xxxiii. See also the *Athenæum* for April 18th, 1885. EDITOR.]

[2] See D'Aubigné's *History of the Reformation*, and the authorities he quotes.

for shelter some time during the year 1527; leaving Worms probably when the publication of Roye's satire seemed likely to compromise his safety. At Marburg there was much to solace him in his exile. Here at least he was to all appearance safe, in an unknown retreat, beyond the reach of Wolsey's emissaries, and under the protection of a prince who was a zealous adherent of the doctrines of the Reformation. In the literary labours which he was diligently prosecuting, the infant University would probably be of some assistance to him; and through the press of Hans Luft he enjoyed a ready means of instructing the inhabitants of his dear native land. Of personal incidents during his residence in Marburg this biography has still very few to tell; it is, as before, not of the man, but of his work that we have to speak. Indeed, to Tyndale himself may, with eminent appropriateness, be applied his own quaint words concerning John the Baptist. He, too, might have said to the English nation what John said to the Jews, "I am the voice of a crier: my *voice* only pertaineth to you; those outward things which ye wonder at [the strange vicissitudes of his life] pertain to myself only, unto the taming of my body: to you am I a voice only, and that which I preach."[1]

We have not, in fact, any authentic record of a single incident in his life at Marburg; yet, from what we know from various sources, we can supply what may at least be accepted as illustrations of his residence there.

Whether or not he was present at the formal inauguration of the University in the old Dominican Convent on the 30th of May, 1527, we may feel assured that he enjoyed the friendship of the eminent men of learning whom the liberality of the Landgrave had attracted to Marburg. Foremost among these was the Professor of Divinity, the pious and eloquent Lambert of Avignon, already alluded to, who, after a life of vicissitude and adventure, which would admirably qualify him to be the companion and consoler of Tyndale, had come

[1] *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon: Works*, Vol. I. p. 104.

to Marburg to enjoy, alas! only three years of peace before the sweating sickness prematurely cut short his days. Herman Buschius, too, who had already met Tyndale at Worms, had found in the infant University on the banks of the Lahn a peaceful refuge from the opposition which the sallies of his too witty pen had provoked; and Tyndale, himself a man of shrewd satirical humour, must have listened with no ordinary relish to one who had played so prominent a part in the revival of letters, who had been the associate of Erasmus and Von Hutten, whose reminiscences would embrace much of the secret history of those mighty movements in learning and religion, which will make the commencement of the sixteenth century for ever memorable in the annals of mankind.

Moreover, though Marburg was sufficiently secluded to render it unlikely that any emissaries from Tyndale's enemies in England would resort thither, it was well enough known to the friends of the Reformation on the Continent; and religious refugees from England and Scotland were continually passing through it on their way to or from Wittemberg. It was at Marburg, therefore, in all probability that the interview between Tyndale and Barnes took place, which Sir Thomas More declares to have had such important results. "I am right credibly informed," writes Sir Thomas, "by a very virtuous man, whom God hath of His goodness illumined and called home again out of the dark Egypt of their blind heresies [Barlow probably is meant], that at such time as Friar Barnes and Tyndale first met, and talked together beyond the sea, after that he [Barnes] fled out of the Friars [Austin Friars in Northampton], where he was enjoined to tarry for his penance after he had borne his faggot, Tyndale and he were of sundry sects. For Friar Barnes was of Zwinglius' sect against the sacrament of the altar, believing that it is nothing but bare bread. But Tyndale was yet at that time not fully fallen so far in that point, but though he were bad enough beside, was yet not content with Friar Barnes for the holding of that heresy. But within a while

after, as he that is falling is soon put over, the Friar made the fool mad outright, and brought him blindfold down into the deepest dungeon of that devilish heresy, wherein he sitteth now fast bounden in the chair of pestilence with the chain of pertinacity."[1] Sir Thomas, indeed, whose language the reader will have perceived is somewhat violent, is not implicitly to be trusted in matters which he only repeats at second-hand; but his information is never to be despised; and whatever we may believe as to the process by which Tyndale's opinions on the Sacrament were changed, it seems tolerably certain that they were, in point of fact, changed between the commencement of 1528 and 1530.

Whatever may be thought of Barnes' visit to Marburg, there is no doubt that during part of the summer and autumn of 1527, there resided there a young Scotsman of high rank, of considerable learning, and of sound judgment in Holy Scripture. Patrick Hamilton, who had incurred suspicion in his native country by his zeal for the Reformation, had left Scotland with three companions on the customary pilgrimage to Wittemberg. The plague, however, was then raging in the Saxon University, and the young Scotsmen consequently repaired for a short time to the new school of learning at Marburg, where their names are still to be seen enrolled in the University Album.[2]

Hamilton's residence at Marburg was of very brief duration, for at the close of 1527 he was again in his native land; but it was long enough to conciliate the warm affection of Lambert, who subsequently paid a grateful tribute of admiration to the zeal and piety of the noble stranger who only returned home to perish at the stake, the proto-martyr of the Scottish Reformation.[3]

Short as was Hamilton's residence in Marburg, it was not

[1] Sir Thomas More's *Confutation: Works*, p. 482.

[2] Three names are inscribed, Patrick Hamilton, John Hamilton, and Gilbert Winram from Edinburgh.

[3] Lambert's eulogy is contained in his commentary on the Apocalypse. (See Lorimer, *Precursors of Knox*, p. 238.) If Marburg was indebted to Hamilton, he,

uneventful. Following the practice of Luther and other Reformers, he had exhibited at Marburg certain *theses* or doctrinal propositions, treating almost exclusively of that which formed the main burden of the teaching of the German Reformation—the doctrine of Justification by Faith; and as this was the first effort of the kind in the nascent University, it naturally created considerable excitement. "Patrick's Places," as they were called, originally written, of course, in Latin, were translated by Fryth after his arrival at Marburg; and the Martyrologist Foxe has reproduced them at length in his *Acts and Monuments*.[1]

It may be assumed as extremely probable that Tyndale and Hamilton were contemporaries at Marburg, and if they did actually meet there, there was one mighty bond to join them in cordial amity. For Tyndale's New Testament had not merely been conveyed to the translator's native land; Scotland, too, had participated in the benefit. Hackett, the busy emissary of Wolsey, whose zeal in seizing copies of Tyndale's Testament in various parts of the Low Countries has already made him known to the reader, intimates to Wolsey in January, 1527, that "divers merchants of Scotland bought many of such like books, and took them to Scotland, a part to Edinburgh, and most part to the town of St. Andrew." With his usual ready officiousness, the English envoy had attempted to seize them, and make a "good fire of them;" but he was too late: the ships had sailed the day before he arrived in Zealand, and were thus able to proceed unmolested with their blessed cargo.[2] If Hamilton was aware of what was passing in his absence in his native country,

too, was indebted to Marburg, as the Scotch poet, John Johnstone, has elegantly confessed in his eulogy on Hamilton:

"E cœlo alluxit primam Germania lucem,
Quâ *Lanus*, et vitreis quâ fluit Albis aquis.
Intulit hinc lucem nostræ Dux prævius oræ;
O felix terra! hôc si foret usa Duce."

See Appendix to McCrie's *Life of Knox*.

[1] Foxe, Vol. IV. p. 563, etc.

[2] Letter from Hackett in Cotton MSS., *Galba*, B. VI.

as it is extremely probable he was, we may easily conceive how he would value the opportunity of enjoying Christian communion with one whom he would regard as having conferred an inestimable benefit upon Scotland.

The intercourse between Hamilton and Fryth, which has by some recent writers been supposed to have occurred while both were resident in Marburg, must now be finally rejected as impossible. Fryth, it is quite certain,[1] did not leave England till the close of 1528; and long before he joined Tyndale at Marburg, the brave young Scotsman had glorified God in the flames.[2] Nearly a year after Hamilton's departure, Fryth arrived at Marburg; and with such a companion, the confidant of former years when hopes were brighter, Tyndale must have spent some months of happiness that would seem like an oasis in the desert. It is difficult, indeed, for us, accustomed to rapid and frequent communication with our distant friends, to realise the comfort which the presence of Fryth brought to Tyndale.

Four weary years had now been spent in exile; and though cheered by the occasional visits of friends, yet he had hitherto had no companion entirely like-minded with himself, and able to give him full information of those matters which he longed so earnestly to know. In Fryth, however, his "own son according to the faith," he had at length procured a comrade whose opinions were entirely in accordance with his own, and who, having been himself at one of the great centres of action, could report the success of that great cause, for the promotion of which Tyndale had abandoned all the delights of home and country. Fryth could tell, as few others could, the whole story of the progress of the Reformation, both in Cambridge and Oxford. The work of Bilney, the conversion of Latimer, the fall of Barnes, the secret circulation of the English New Testament, the hostility of the bishops, the proposed Royal

[1] See Appendix A.

[2] He was burned at St. Andrew's on the last day of February, 1528: "*Pridie kalendas Martii*," says his friend Lambert, in his eulogy on him.

divorce, the hopes and fears that were beginning to find expression in England—all these were well known to Fryth; and in the interest which the narrative thus told from personal experience would excite, Tyndale would almost forget that he had been so long absent from the land which he loved so well. That Fryth should express himself with some bitterness of the cardinal and the bishops was natural and inevitable; he had been imprisoned, degraded, compelled to abandon his country, for no crime, except merely for reading the Word of God in the English language, and studying the works of the Continental Reformers; and surely it was neither inexcusable nor blamable, that Tyndale should have felt indignant at the conduct of those who thus sought to deprive the people of England of that book, which God had ordained for their spiritual guidance and comfort. From this time onwards we can trace in Tyndale's works an accession of sharpness in writing of the proceedings of the clergy: let those who feel inclined to censure him for "speaking evil of dignities," first of all make some attempt fairly to estimate the provocation offered to him.

But we are somewhat anticipating the course of our narrative. Some months before the arrival of Fryth, Tyndale had issued from the press of Hans Luft, one of the most famous of his works, *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon*. Foxe, indeed, in his collected edition of the works of Tyndale, has assigned *The Wicked Mammon* to an earlier date, the 8th of May, 1527; and the bibliographers, adopting the statement without inquiry,[1] have asserted, with almost unanimous consent, that the work was issued at Worms on the day

[1] See Lowndes, Tanner, Lewis, Wood, or any other writer, professing to give the dates of Tyndale's works. Anderson, as has been already mentioned, assigns the book to 1527; yet even he was startled by the curious fact of the first and second edition being issued on the same day in successive years. I need not say that in the case of books of this early date, the ordinary bibliographical manuals are not of much value; they usually repeat the statements of previous writers without any inquiry, and even when they describe a book from actual examination, they take for granted that everything stated on the title-page is literally and exactly true, with a simplicity that is singularly unsuspicious.

mentioned by Foxe, and was reprinted on the same day in the next year by Luft at Marburg. Not only, however, has no one ever pretended to have seen this edition of Worms, but such an early date is in plain contradiction to Tyndale's own express words. In the Preface he gives the account of his separation from Roye, which has been already quoted, and adds the following very precise narrative of what occurred subsequently:—"After we were departed [separated] he went and gat him new friends . . . and when he had stored him of money, he gat him to Argentine [Strasburg]; a *year after that, and now twelve months before the printing of this work*, came one Jerome through Worms to Argentine." According, therefore, to Tyndale's own express statement, *The Wicked Mammon* was not printed till quite two years after Roye had left him; but Roye was with him, as we know from the testimony of Cochloeus, in September, 1525, and remained with him till "that was ended which he could not do alone without one both to write, and to help him to compare the texts together," that is, probably, till March or April, 1526, so that it seems extremely probable that Hans Luft's edition of May 8th, 1528, was the first issue of Tyndale's work.[1]

The Parable of the Wicked Mammon is an exposition of what is more usually known in this country as the Parable of the Unjust Steward. In reality, however, the work is a treatise on the doctrine of Justification by Faith, in which Tyndale with great clearness and acuteness examines all those texts which were usually cited as incompatible with that

[1] That this is not inconsistent with Tyndale's words in his *Practice of Prelates*, will be shown subsequently. One other circumstance connected with the bibliography of *The Wicked Mammon* may here be explained. There are in existence two different editions, one in quarto, the other in octavo, both bearing the imprint of Hans Luft, Marburg, May 8, 1528. This has been explained by Professor Walter, by supposing that the one was for rich readers, the other for poor. On inspecting the quarto in the British Museum, my suspicions of its genuineness were aroused; and Mr. Bullen, of the Museum, who was kind enough to examine it with care, assures me that it was not printed in 1528, nor in Germany, but almost certainly in London, and in the reign of Edward VI.; so that Professor Walter's theory must be discarded.

doctrine, and shows that when rightly interpreted, according to the general scope of the New Testament, they were not inconsistent with it. Besides this negative clearing away of objections, *The Wicked Mammon* also contains a plain summary of the real meaning of the doctrine, and an exposition of the passages of Scripture which seem most precisely to affirm it. The choice of subject may fairly enough be considered an indication of the paramount influence which Luther now exercised over the mind of Tyndale; and, indeed, there are several striking similarities of sentiment and expression which were almost certainly suggested by the writings of the great German Reformer. Tyndale, at the same time, treats the subject in a perfectly original manner, with the boldness and clearness of a man who had perfectly grasped it in his own mind; and also, it must be added, without any of that occasional extravagance of language which has, not altogether without reason, exposed Luther to the animadversions of more cautious theologians. The work itself, however, will be its own best expositor; and both from its own importance in the history of the English Reformation, and from its value as illustrating the opinions of Tyndale, the reader may naturally demand a few passages by way of sample of its contents.

If the "ancient doctor," near Little Sodbury, who first hinted to Tyndale the idea that the Pope was Antichrist, survived to read *The Wicked Mammon*, he must have contemplated with feelings of satisfaction, almost of amazement, the powerful hold this idea had taken of the mind of Tyndale. Thus boldly, for example, he treats the subject in the Preface; and, as we shall subsequently see, the idea seemed to grow and to strengthen with years in his mind. and he waxes ever bolder and more bitter in his treatment of it.

"Mark this also above all things, that Antichrist is not an outward thing, that is to say, a man that should suddenly appear with wonders, as our fathers talked of him. No, verily; for Antichrist is a spiritual thing; and is as much to say as, *against Christ;* that is, one that preacheth false doctrine, contrary to Christ. Antichrist was in the Old Testament, and

fought with the prophets; he was also in the time of Christ and the Apostles, as thou readest in the epistles of John, and of Paul to the Corinthians and Galatians, and other epistles. Antichrist is now, and shall (I doubt not) endure till the world's end. But his nature is (when he is uttered [disclosed], and overcome with the Word of God) to go out of the play for a season, and to disguise himself, and then to come in again with a new name and new raiment. As thou seest how Christ rebuketh the Scribes and Pharisees in the Gospel, (which were very Antichrists,) saying: 'Woe be to you, Pharisees! for ye rob widows' houses; ye pray long prayers under a colour; ye shut up the kingdom of heaven, and suffer not them that would to enter in; ye have taken away the key of knowledge; ye make men break God's commandments with your traditions; ye beguile the people with hypocrisy and such like;' which things all our prelates do, but have yet gotten them new names, and other garments and weeds, and are otherwise disguised. There is difference in the names between a pope, a cardinal, a bishop, and so forth, and to say a Scribe, a Pharisee, a senior, and so forth; but the thing is all one. Even so now, when we have uttered him, he will change himself once more, and turn himself into an angel of light. Read the place, I exhort thee, whatsoever thou art that readest this, and note it well. The Jews look for Christ, and He is come fifteen hundred years ago, and they not aware: we also have looked for Antichrist, and he hath reigned as long, and we not aware: and that because either of us looked carnally for him, and not in the places where we ought to have sought. The Jews had found Christ verily, if they had sought Him in the law and the prophets, whither Christ sendeth them to seek. We also had spied out Antichrist long ago, if we had looked in the doctrine of Christ and His Apostles; where because the beast seeth himself now to be sought for, he roareth, and seeketh new holes to hide himself in, and changeth himself into a thousand fashions, with all manner wiliness, falsehood, subtlety, and craft. Because that his excommunications are come to light, he maketh it treason unto the king to be acquainted with Christ. If Christ and they may not reign together, one hope we have, that Christ shall live for ever. The old Antichrists brought Christ unto Pilate, saying, 'By our law He ought to die;' and when Pilate bade them judge Him after their law, they answered, 'It is not lawful for us to kill any man;' which they did to the intent that they which regarded not the shame of their false excommunications, should yet fear to confess Christ, because that the temporal sword had condemned Him. They do all things of a good zeal, they say; they love you so well, that they had rather burn you, than that you should have fellowship with Christ. They are jealous over you amiss, as saith St. Paul. They would divide you from Christ and His holy Testament; and join you to the pope, to believe in his testament and promises.

Some man will ask, peradventure, Why I take the labour to make this work, inasmuch as they will burn it, seeing they burnt the Gospel? I answer, In burning the New Testament they did none other thing than

that I looked for; no more shall they do if they burn me also, if it be God's will it shall so be.

"Nevertheless, in translating the New Testament I did my duty, and so do I now, and will do as much more as God hath ordained me to do. And as I offered that to all men, to correct it, whosoever could, even so I do this. Whosoever, therefore, readeth this, compare it unto the Scripture. If God's Word bear record unto it, and thou also feelest in thine heart that it is so, be of good comfort, and give God thanks. If God's Word condemn it, then hold it accursed, and so do all other doctrines: as Paul counselleth his Galatians. Believe not every spirit suddenly, but judge them by the Word of God, which is the trial of all doctrine, and lasteth for ever. Amen."

Tyndale's purpose was, as has been already stated, to give what he considered the true meaning of those passages of Scripture which were generally interpreted as opposed to the doctrine of Justification by Faith, or as he himself, imitating the phraseology of Erasmus, expresses it, "to expound them aright and to bring the Scripture unto the right sense, and to dig again the wells of Abraham, and to purge and cleanse them of the earth of worldly wisdom wherewith these Philistines have stopped them." Of the nature of his teaching on the subject the following specimen will abundantly satisfy the reader:—

"This is plain, and a sure conclusion, not to be doubted of, that there must be first in the heart of a man, before he do any good work, a greater and a preciouser thing than all the good works in the world, to reconcile him to God, to bring the love and favour of God to him, to make him love God again, to make him righteous and good in the sight of God, to do away his sin, to deliver him and loose him out of that captivity wherein he was conceived and born, in which he could neither love God nor the will of God. Or else, how can he work any good work that should please God, if there were not some supernatural goodness in him, given of God freely, whereof the good work must spring? even as a sick man must first be healed or made whole, ere he can do the deeds of an whole man; and as the blind man must first have sight given him, ere he can see; and he that hath his feet in fetters, gyves, or stocks, must first be loosed, ere he can go, walk, or run; and even as they which thou readest of in the Gospel, that they were possessed of the devils, could not laud God till the devils were cast out.

"That precious thing which must be in the heart, ere a man can work any good work, is the Word of God, which in the Gospel preacheth, proffereth, and bringeth unto all that repent and believe, the favour of God

William Tyndale otherwise called Hychins to the reader.

GRace and peace with all maner ſpirituall fealinge and living worthy of the kyndnes of Chriſt / be with the reader and with all that thurſt the will of God Amē. The cauſe why I ſett my name before this litle treatyſe ād have not rather done it in the new teſtament is that then I folowed the counſell of Chriſt which exhorteth men Matth. vj. to doo theyr good deades ſecretly ād to be contēt with the cōſcience of well doynge / and that God ſeeth vs / and pacientlye to abyde the rewarde of the laſt daye which Chriſt hath purchaſed for vs ād now wold fayne have done lyke wyſe / but am compelled other wiſe to doo.

While I abode a faythfull cōpanyon which now hath take a nother vyage apō him / to preach Chriſt where (I ſuppoſe) he was never yet preached (God which putt in his herte thither to goo ſende his ſpirite with him / cōforte him and bringe his purpoſe to good effecte) one Willia Roye a man somewhat crafty when he cometh vnto new accoyntaunce and before he be thorow knowen and namely whē affis ſpēt / came vnto me ād offered his helpe. As longe as he had no money / somewhat I could ruele hī. but as ſone as he had goten him money / he became lyke him ſelfe

in Christ. Whosoever heareth the Word and believeth it, the same is thereby righteous; and thereby is given him the Spirit of God, which leadeth him unto all that is the will of God; and [he] is loosed from the captivity and bondage of the devil; and his heart is free to love God, and hath lust to do the will of God. Therefore it is called the word of life, the word of grace, the word of health, the word of redemption, the word of forgiveness, and the word of peace: he that heareth it not, or believeth it not, can by no means be made righteous before God. This confirmeth Peter in the fifteenth of the Acts, saying that God through faith doth purify the hearts. For of what nature soever the Word of God is, of the same nature must the hearts be which believe thereon, and cleave thereunto. Now is the Word living, pure, righteous, and true; and even so maketh it the hearts of them that believe thereon."

If it was objected to this teaching that there were many who believe, or professed to believe, and yet in whose lives no change was perceptible, Tyndale replied :—

"These are they which Judas [Jude] in his epistle calleth dreamers, which deceive themselves with their own fantasies. For what other thing is their imagination, which they call faith, than a dreaming of the faith, and an opinion of their own imagination wrought without the grace of God? These must needs be worse at the latter end than at the beginning. These are the old vessels that rend when new wine is poured into them; that is, they hear God's Word, but hold it not, and therefore wax worse than they were before. But the right faith springeth not of man's fantasy, neither is it in any man's power to obtain it; but it is altogether the pure gift of God poured into us freely, without all manner doing of us, without deserving and merits, yea, and without seeking for of us; and is (as saith Paul in the second to the Ephesians) even God's gift and grace, purchased through Christ. Therefore is it mighty in operation, full of virtue, and ever working; which also reneweth a man and begetteth him afresh, altereth him, changeth him, and turneth him altogether into a new nature and conversation; so that a man feeleth his heart altogether altered and changed, and far otherwise disposed than before; and hath power to love that which before he could not but hate; and delighteth in that which before he abhorred; and hateth that which before he could not but love. And it setteth the soul at liberty, and maketh her free to follow the will of God, and doth to the soul even as health doth unto the body, after that a man is pined and wasted away with a long soking [exhausting] disease: the legs cannot bear him, he cannot lift up his hands to help himself, his taste is corrupt, sugar is bitter in his mouth, his stomach abhorreth,[1] longing after slibbersauce and swash, at which a whole stomach is ready to cast his gorge. When health cometh, she [it] changeth and altereth him clean;

[1] Apparently some words are here omitted; and in the copy in the Museum the words *good meat* are supplied in ink by an old hand.

giveth him strength in all his members, and lust to do of his own accord that which before he could not do, neither could suffer that any man exhorted him to do; and hath now lust in wholesome things, and his members are free and at liberty, and have power to do, of their own accord, all things which belong to an whole man to do, which afore they had no power to do, but were in captivity and bondage. So likewise in all things doth right faith to the soul.

"The Spirit of God accompanieth faith, and bringeth with her [*i.e.*, with faith] light, wherewith a man beholdeth himself in the law of God, and seeth his miserable bondage and captivity, and humbleth himself, and abhorreth himself: she [faith] bringeth God's promises of all good things in Christ. God worketh with His Word, and in His Word: and when His Word is preached, faith rooteth herself in the hearts of the elect; and as faith entereth, and the Word of God is believed, the power of God looseth the heart from the captivity and bondage under sin, and knitteth and coupleth him to God and to the will of God; altereth him, changeth him clean, fashioneth, and forgeth him anew; giveth him power to love, and to do that which before was impossible for him either to love or do; and turneth him unto a new nature, so that he loveth that which he before hated, and hateth that which he before loved; and is clean altered, and changed, and contrary disposed; and is knit and coupled fast to God's will, and naturally bringeth forth good works, that is to say, that which God commandeth to do, and not things of his own imagination. And that doth he of his own accord, as a tree bringeth forth fruit of her own accord. And as thou needest not to bid a tree to bring forth fruit, so is there no law put unto him that believeth, and is justified through faith, as saith Paul in the first epistle to Timothy, the first chapter. Neither is it needful; for the law of God is written and graved in his heart, and his pleasure is therein. And as without commandment, but even of his own nature, he eateth, drinketh, seeth, heareth, talketh, and goeth; even so of his own nature, without co-action or compulsion of the law, bringeth he forth good works. And as a whole [healthy] man, when he is athirst, tarrieth but for drink, and when he hungreth, abideth but for meat, and then drinketh and eateth naturally; even so is the faithful ever athirst and an hungred after the will of God, and tarrieth but for occasion. And whensoever an occasion is given, he worketh naturally the will of God: for this blessing is given to all them that trust in Christ's blood, that they thirst and hunger to do God's will. He that hath not this faith, is but an unprofitable babbler of faith and works; and wotteth neither what he babbleth, nor what he meaneth, or whereunto his words pertain: for he feeleth not the power of faith, nor the working of the Spirit in his heart; but interpreteth the Scriptures, which speak of faith and works, after his own blind reason and foolish fantasies, and not of any feeling that he hath in his heart; as a man rehearseth a tale of another man's mouth, and wotteth not whether it be so or no as he saith, nor hath any experience of the thing itself."

The treatise, however, is not entirely occupied with doctrinal discussions; Tyndale had a practical English mind, and entertained quite as high an opinion of the extent of the obligation under which we lie to our neighbours, as of the value of that doctrine which it was the chief purpose of his treatise to expound. "If," says he, "my neighbour need and I give him not, neither depart [share] liberally with him of that which I have, then withhold I from him unrighteously *that which is his own.* And this unrighteousness in our mammon see very few men, because it is spiritual; and in those goods which are gotten most truly and justly are men much beguiled. For they suppose they do no man wrong in keeping them; in that they got them not with stealing, robbing, oppression, and usury, neither hurt any man now with them." And with still more emphatic plainness he declares, "If thy neighbour need, and thou help him not, being able, thou withholdest his duty from him, and art a thief before God:" "Among Christian men love maketh all things common; every man is other's debtor, and every man is bound to minister to his neighbour, and to supply his neighbour's lack, of that wherewith God hath endowed him." And still more copiously in a passage well worthy of the consideration of those who suppose that Tyndale was merely a fierce polemical theologian:—

"The order of love or charity, which some dream [of], the Gospel of Christ knoweth not of, that a man should begin at himself, and serve himself first, and then descend, I wot not by what steps. Love seeketh not her own profit (2 Cor. xii.); but maketh a man to forget himself, and to turn his profit to another man, as Christ sought not Himself, nor His own profit, but ours. This term, myself, is not in the Gospel; neither yet father, mother, sister, brother, kinsman, that one should be preferred in love above another. But Christ is all in all things. Every Christian man to another is Christ Himself; and thy neighbour's need hath as good right in thy goods as hath Christ Himself, which is heir and lord over all. And look what thou owest to Christ, that thou owest to thy neighbour's need. To thy neighbour owest thou thine heart, thyself, and all that thou hast and canst do. The love that springeth out of Christ excludeth no man, neither putteth difference between one and another. In Christ we are all of one degree, without respect of persons. Notwithstanding, though

a Christian man's heart be open to all men and receiveth all men, yet because that his ability of goods extendeth not so far, this provision is made, that every man shall care for his own household, as father and mother, and thine elders that have holpen thee, wife, children, and servants. If thou shouldest not care and provide for thine household, then wert thou an infidel; seeing thou hast taken on thee so to do, and forasmuch as that is thy part committed to thee of the congregation. When thou hast done thy duty to thine household, and yet hast further abundance of the blessing of God, that owest thou to the poor that cannot labour, or would labour and can get no work, and are destitute of friends; to the poor, I mean, which thou knowest, to them of thine own parish. For that provision ought to be had in the congregation, that every parish care for their poor. If thy neighbours which thou knowest be served, and thou yet have superfluity, and hearest necessity to be among the brethren a thousand miles off, to them art thou debtor. Yea, to the very infidels we be debtors, if they need, as far forth as we maintain them not against Christ, or to blaspheme Christ. Thus is every man that needeth thy help, thy father, mother, sister, and brother in Christ; even as every man that doth the will of the Father is father, mother, sister, and brother unto Christ.

"Moreover, if any be an infidel and a false Christian, and forsake his household, his wife, children, and such as cannot help themselves, then art thou bound, and [*i.e.*, if] thou have wherewith, even as much as to thine own household. And they have as good right in thy goods as thou thyself: and if thou withdraw mercy from them, and hast wherewith to help them, then art thou a thief. If thou show mercy, so doest thou thy duty, and art a faithful minister in the household of Christ; and of Christ shalt thou have thy reward and thanks. If the whole world were thine, yet hath every brother his right in thy goods; and is heir with thee, as we are all heirs with Christ."

And these were not mere idle words in Tyndale's case, expressing nothing more than pious sentimentalism; he believed them with all his heart, and honestly attempted to walk in accordance with them. "He reserved for himself," says Foxe in his account of his life at Antwerp, "two days in the week, which he named his days of pastime, namely, Monday and Saturday:" the one of these was devoted to visiting all English refugees in the city and relieving their wants; on the other "he walked round about the town, seeking out every corner and hole where he suspected any poor person to dwell, and where he found any to be well occupied and yet overburdened with children, or else aged or weak,

those also he plentifully relieved: and thus he spent his two days of pastime."

Such passages as these, which are a fair specimen of the style and teaching of *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon*, will probably be regarded by the reader as embracing at once sound theology and admirable morality. Even those who might be inclined to object that some of the doctrinal interpretations of the writer are over-refined, would admit that his speculative subtlety was amply compensated by the lofty tone of pure moral teaching which pervades the book. It was not thus, however, that Tyndale's *orthodox* contemporaries judged of the work. In a public instrument issued by the Archbishop of Canterbury, *The Wicked Mammon* was singled out for condemnation as "containing many detestable errors and damnable opinions." The work was also condemned by an assemblage of prelates and doctors summoned by Henry to deliberate as to the character of the English books then in circulation in the country. Preachers were instructed to hold it up to public detestation, and to exhort their hearers to expel from their hearts all evil influences that they might have imbibed by reading so pernicious a book. A catalogue of nine-and-twenty distinct heretical propositions was drawn up from the dangerous publication, and was held up to execration, that all good Christians might abhor "those great errors and pestilent heresies."[1] To possess a copy of a book esteemed so wicked was a heinous fault; and those who were guilty were rigorously examined, whether they were prepared to adopt Tyndale's opinions and to incur the consequent penalties, or to renounce and retract them.

Perhaps, however, nothing so completely demonstrates the perfect hatred with which the book was received by the authorities of the Church in England, as the bitter language which Sir Thomas More uniformly employs in speaking of what he calls, with wilful metathesis, "The Wicked Book of Mammon," "very *mammona iniquitatis*, a very treasury, and

[1] Wilkins' *Concilia*, Vol. III; Foxe, Vol. IV.

well-spring of wickedness" . . . . "a book by which many have been beguiled, and brought into many wicked heresies; which thing (saving that the devil is ready to put out men's eyes, that are content willingly to wax blind) were else, in good faith, to me no little wonder: for never was there made a more foolish frantic book."[1] Of the amount of provocation given by the book to the authorities, the reader is perfectly qualified to judge, for the only passage that could be considered in any way offensive is that on Antichrist, which has already been quoted; and if in the sequel we shall find Tyndale waxing sharper and fiercer in the language which he employs, it must not be forgotten that his first writings, though comparatively mild and temperate, were notwithstanding condemned as "frantic," and abounding "in pestilent heresies, contagious, and damnable." But it has never been easy to propitiate the approbation of the "children sitting in the market-place."

One other remark on *The Wicked Mammon* is of sufficient interest to be inserted before we pass on to the consideration of Tyndale's next and greater work. By way of exegetical comment upon the word "Mammon," Tyndale ventures to say, "Mammon is an Hebrew word, and signifieth riches or temporal goods; and namely [especially] all superfluity, and all that is above necessity, and that which is required unto our necessary uses; wherewith a man may help another, without undoing or hurting himself: for *hamon*, in the Hebrew speech, signifieth a multitude, or abundance or many; and therehence cometh *mahamon* or *mammon*, abundance, or plenteousness of goods or riches." Without entering into any philological disquisition, it will be apparent to any one acquainted with Hebrew that Tyndale's criticism is that of a man who well understood the genius of that language; and, in Tyndale's time, it probably indicated an amount of knowledge and familiarity with Hebrew such as only the fewest possessed.

[1] Sir Thomas More's *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*.

It seems not improbable that *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon* had been written some time before it was printed; possibly, indeed, it was written at Worms, and its publication was delayed by the necessity under which Tyndale lay of consulting for his safety by flight. On the very same day on which it issued from the press at Marburg, there also issued, according to some authorities, the largest of all Tyndale's original works, his treatise entitled, *The Obedience of a Christian man, and how Christian rulers ought to govern, wherein also, if thou mark diligently, thou shalt find eyes to perceive the crafty conveyance of all jugglers.*[1] The date is not an impossible one, although it lacks confirmation: but if *The Obedience* were printed at the same time as *The Wicked Mammon*, it was certainly written after it, for it contains allusions to *The Mammon*, as a work previously composed.

In fact, it is plain, from an examination of *The Obedience*, that it was not printed until the outburst of that first violent assault upon the circulation of the English Bible, which marked the commencement of the year 1528. "The Preface to the Reader" was inspired by the occurrences of which Tyndale probably had just heard through the narrative of some refugee for conscience' sake.[2] The arrest and recantation of Bilney and Arthur, the flight of George Joye, the discovery of Garret's proceedings at Oxford, the imprisonment of Fryth and Clarke and their associates, the infirmity of so many of the brethren, who, to secure themselves from danger, revealed all that they knew of the manner by which the New Testament and other books were introduced into England,

[1] An edition of this date was No. 3728 of the catalogue of the late George Offor's Library. "Tyndale, *Obedience of a Christian Man*.. [also the *Parable of the Wicked Mammon*]. No colophon to the first part, i. e. the *Obedience*, so that Walter's description is *wrong*. Quarto, by me Hans Luft, the VIII of May, 1528. Query: *was this book burnt?*" Tyndale, in his *Practice of Prelates*, which was probably written at the close of 1530, says, "Well toward three years agone I set forth *The Obedience*;" to which May, 1528, would pretty well correspond; October, the date of the next edition, though not totally inconsistent with Tyndale's words, does not quite so well answer to them.

[2] Such as George Joye, who left England in December, 1527.

all this had evidently come to the knowledge of Tyndale, and he writes accordingly in that tone of consolation which befitted men overwhelmed with innumerable misfortunes. Tribulation and persecution, he reminds his readers, were in general a sign of the favour and love of God; the truth had always been opposed by the world; and those whom God designed to honour with His special favour, were generally led through tribulation and adversity. "If God," says he, in a passage which smacks of the boldness of Luther, "promise riches, the way thereto is poverty; whom He loveth, him He chasteneth: whom He exalteth, He casteth down; whom He saveth, He damneth first. He bringeth no man to heaven, except He send him to hell first. If He promise life, He slayeth first: when He buildeth, He casteth all down first. He is no patcher; He cannot build on another man's foundation."

The Obedience is the largest and most elaborate of all Tyndale's works; next to his translation of Holy Scripture, it was the book by which he was best known to his contemporaries, that which exerted the greatest influence upon those who were friendly to the Reformation, and which gave deepest offence to the authorities of the Church: it is the book, in a word, in which the mind of Tyndale is most fully portrayed by himself; and it is entitled, therefore, to a prominent place in a biography which attempts to give to posterity an image of the mind of the great Reformer. No apology therefore, it is conceived, is due for the length of the following extracts, without a careful perusal of which, indeed, the work of Tyndale and his position will scarcely be intelligible to the reader.

Henry, as we have seen, had ordered Tyndale's translation to be burned; and Tunstal and Warham had stigmatised it, even in the edition without glosses, as "containing pestiferous and pernicious poison." But, in truth, it was not merely against Tyndale's translation that their rage was directed, but against any version in the English tongue. It was, for

example, asserted that it was not necessary for the people to have the Word of God in their own native language, and that many disagreeable and disastrous consequences might follow if the laymen had the Holy Scriptures in their hands in the mother-tongue. Against this monstrous opinion, Tyndale argues at considerable length and with great acuteness in his Preface :—

"The sermons which thou readest in the Acts of the Apostles, and all that the Apostles preached, were no doubt preached in the mother-tongue. Why, then, might they not be written in the mother-tongue? As, if one of us preach a good sermon, why may it not be written? Saint Jerom also translated the Bible into his mother-tongue : why may not we also? They will say it cannot be translated into our tongue, it is so rude. It is not so rude as they are false liars. For the Greek tongue agreeth more with the English than with the Latin. And the properties of the Hebrew tongue agreeth a thousand times more with the English than with the Latin. The manner of speaking is both one : so that in a thousand places thou needest not but to translate it into English, word for word, when thou must seek a compass in the Latin, and yet shall have much work to translate it well-favouredly, so that it have the same grace and sweetness, sense and pure understanding with it in the Latin, and as it hath in the Hebrew. A thousand parts better may it be translated into the English, than into the Latin. Yea, and except my memory fail me, and that I have forgotten what I read when I was a child, thou shalt find in the English Chronicle, how that King Adelstone caused the Holy Scripture to be translated into the tongue that then was in England, and how the prelates exhorted him thereto.[1]

"Moreover, seeing that one of you ever preacheth contrary to another ; and when two of you meet, the one disputeth and brawleth with the other, as it were two scolds ; and forasmuch as one holdeth this doctor, and another that ; one followeth Duns [Scotus], another St. Thomas [Aquinas], another Bonaventure, Alexander de Hales, Raymond, Lyre, Brygot, Dorbel, Holcot, Gorram, Trumbett, Hugo de Sancto Victore, De Monte Regio, De Novâ Villâ, De Mediâ Villâ, and such like out of number ;[2] so that if thou hadst but of every author one book, thou couldst not pile them up in any warehouse in London, and every author is one contrary unto another. In so great diversity of spirits, how shall I know who lieth, and who sayeth truth? Whereby shall I try and judge

[1] There seems to be no authority for this, which is also stated in Foxe: perhaps there was some confusion in Tyndale's memory, or in the Chronicle, between Athelstone and Alfred.

[2] These, the reader will sufficiently understand, are the names of some of the most famous of the schoolmen: they and their works do not concern us here ; those who wish to know more regarding them may consult the customary authorities on such matters.

them? Verily by God's Word, which only is true. But how shall I that do, when thou wilt not let me see Scripture?

"Nay, say they, the Scripture is so hard, that thou couldst never understand it but by the doctors. That is, I must measure the meteyard by the cloth. Here be twenty cloths of divers lengths and of divers breadths: how shall I be sure of the length of the meteyard by them? I suppose, rather, I must be first sure of the length of the meteyard, and thereby measure and judge of the cloths. If I must first believe the doctor, then is the doctor first true, and the truth of the Scripture dependeth of his truth; and so the truth of God springeth of the truth of man. Thus Antichrist turneth the roots of the trees upward. What is the cause that we damn some of Origen's works, and allow some? How know we that some is heresy and some not? By the Scripture, I trow. How know we that St. Augustine (which is the best, or one of the best, that ever wrote upon the Scripture) wrote many things amiss at the beginning, as many other doctors do? Verily, by the Scriptures; as he himself well perceived afterward, when he looked more diligently upon them, and revoked many things again. He wrote of many things which he understood not when he was newly converted, ere he had thoroughly seen the Scripture; and followed the opinions of Plato, and the common persuasions of man's wisdom that were then famous.....

"Finally, that this threatening and forbidding the lay people to read the Scripture is not for the love of your souls (which they care for as the fox doth for the geese), is evident, and clearer than the sun; inasmuch as they permit and suffer you to read Robin Hood, and Bevis of Hampton, Hercules, Hector and Troilus, with a thousand histories and fables of love and wantonness, and ribaldry, as filthy as heart can think, to corrupt the minds of youth withal, clean contrary to the doctrine of Christ and of His Apostles: for Paul saith, 'See that fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, be not once named among you, as it becometh saints; neither filthiness, neither foolish talking nor jesting, which are not comely: for this ye know, that no whoremonger, either unclean person, or covetous person, which is the worshipper of images, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.' And after saith he, 'Through such things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of unbelief.' Now seeing they permit you freely to read those things which corrupt your minds and rob you of the kingdom of God and Christ, and bring the wrath of God upon you, how is this forbidding for love of your souls?"

The whole book, in fact, is argumentative and polemical; it was intended as a defence of the Reformers from the imputations made against them that "they caused insurrection, and taught the people to disobey their heads and governors, and to rise against their princes, and to make all common, and to make havoc of other men's goods." Such was the

common accusation of the day against the doctrine of the Reformers, who were often charged with having instigated all the excesses of the unfortunate war of the peasants in Germany, although in truth no one had condemned them more severely than Luther. The Reformers are still sometimes spoken of as if they had been apostles of sedition and instigators of rebellion; and, unfortunately, some of them cannot be entirely freed from this charge; but to allege it against Tyndale or any of those who are usually esteemed the leaders of the English Reformation, is simply to exhibit unaccountable and inexcusable ignorance. Against the usurped authority of the pope and the clergy, who claimed exemption from the jurisdiction of the civil power, and lorded it over the persons and property of all subjects, Tyndale protests in the strongest terms; but to the lawful sovereign he acknowledges himself bound to show an entire and implicit submission of the most absolute kind, as far removed from anything seditious as can well be imagined. It would, in fact, be much nearer to the truth to charge Tyndale, Latimer, and Cranmer with inculcating an almost slavish obedience to kings, than to insinuate that they justly exposed themselves to punishment by abetting treason and sedition.

"The King," says Tyndale, "is, in this world, without law; and may at his lust [pleasure] do right or wrong, and shall give accounts but to God only. . . . Heads and governors are ordained of God, and are even the gift of God, whether they be good or bad. And whatsoever is done to us by them, that doth God, be it good or bad. If they be evil, why are they evil? Verily, for our wickedness' sake are they evil; because that when they were good, we would not receive that goodness of the hand of God, and be thankful, submitting ourselves unto His laws and ordinances; but abuse the goodness of God unto our sensual and beastly lusts. Therefore doth God make His scourge of them, and turn them to wild beasts, contrary to the nature of their names and offices, even into lions, bears, foxes, and unclean swine, to avenge Himself of our unnatural and blind unkindness, and of our rebellious disobedience. . . . . Evil rulers then are a sign that God is angry and wroth with us. . . . . Let us receive all things of God, whether it be good or bad; let us humble ourselves under His mighty hand, and submit ourselves unto His nurture and chastising, and not withdraw ourselves from His correction. Read Hebr. xii. for thy

comfort; and let us not take the staff by the end, or seek to avenge ourselves on His rod, which is the evil rulers. The child, as long as he seeketh to avenge himself upon the rod, hath an evil heart; for he thinketh not that the correction is right, or that he hath deserved it, neither repenteth, but rejoiceth in his wickedness: and so long shall he never be without a rod: yea, so long shall the rod be made sharper and sharper. If he knowledge his fault and take the correction meekly, and even kiss the rod, and amend himself with the learning and nurture of his father and mother, then is the rod taken away and burnt.

"So, if we resist evil rulers, seeking to set ourselves at liberty, we shall, no doubt, bring ourselves into more evil bondage, and wrap ourselves in much more misery and wretchedness. For if the heads overcome, then lay they more weight on their backs, and make their yoke sorer, and tie them shorter. If they overcome their evil rulers, then make their way for a more cruel nation, or for some tyrant of their own nation, which hath no right unto the crown. If we submit ourselves unto the chastising of God, and meekly knowledge our sins for which we are scourged, and kiss the rod, and amend our living; then will God take the rod away, that is, He will give the rulers a better heart. Or if they continue their malice and persecute you for well-doing, and because ye put your trust in God, then will God deliver you out of their tyranny for His truth's sake. It is the same God now that was in the old time, and delivered the fathers and the prophets, the apostles, and other holy saints. And whatsoever He sware to them He hath sworn to us. And as He delivered them out of all temptation, cumbrance, and adversity, because they consented and submitted themselves unto His will, and trusted in His goodness and truth; even so will He do to us, if we do likewise.

"A Christian man, in respect of God, is but a passive thing; a thing that suffereth only, and doth nought; as the sick, in respect of the surgeon or physician, doth but suffer only. The surgeon lanceth and cutteth out the dead flesh, seareth the wounds, thrusteth in tents, seareth, burneth, seweth or stitcheth, and layeth to caustics, to draw out the corruption; and, last of all, layeth to healing plaisters, and maketh it whole. The physician likewise giveth purgations and drinks to drive out the disease, and then with restoratives bringeth health. Now if the sick resist the razor, the searching iron, and so forth, doth he not resist his own health, and is cause of his own death? So likewise is it of us, if we resist evil rulers, which are the rod and scourge wherewith God chastiseth us; the instruments wherewith God searcheth our wounds; and bitter drinks to drive out the sin and to make it appear, and caustics to draw out by the roots the core of the pocks of the soul that fretteth inward. A Christian man, therefore, receiveth all things of the hand of God, both good and bad, both sweet and sour, both wealth and woe. If any person do me good, whether it be father, mother, and so forth, that receive I of God, and to God give thanks: for He gave wherewith, and gave a commandment, and moved his heart so to do. Adversity also receive I of the hand

of God, as a wholesome medicine, though it be somewhat bitter. Temptation and adversity do both kill sin, and also utter [manifest] it. For though a Christian man knoweth every thing how to live, yet is the flesh so weak, that he can never take up his cross himself, to kill and mortify the flesh: he must have another to lay it on his back. In many also sin lieth hid within, and festereth and rotteth inward, and is not seen; so that they think how they are good and perfect, and keep the law: as the young man Matt. xix. said, he had observed all of a child; and yet lied falsely in his heart, as the text following well declareth. When all is at peace and no man troubleth us, we think that we are patient and love our neighbours as ourselves; but let our neighbour hurt us in word or deed, and then find we it otherwise. Then fume we, and rage, and set up the bristles, and bend ourselves to take vengeance. If we loved with godly love, for Christ's kindness' sake, we should desire no vengeance; but pity him, and desire God to forgive and amend him, knowing well that no flesh can do otherwise than sin, except that God preserve him. Thou wilt say, What good doth such persecution and tyranny unto the righteous? First, it maketh them feel the working of God's Spirit in them, and that their faith is unfeigned. Secondarily, I say that no man is so great a sinner, if he repent and believe, but that he is righteous in Christ and in the promises: yet if thou look on the flesh, and unto the law, there is no man so perfect that is not found a sinner; nor any man so pure that hath not somewhat to be yet purged. This shall suffice at this time as concerning obedience."

To charge such sentiments as these with any tendency to encourage insubordination and rebellion, is a manifest absurdity; they are, in fact, tantamount to a profession of passive obedience in its strictest and simplest form.

But Tyndale does not rest satisfied with merely defending himself and his friends from the imputations made against them by their enemies; he carries the war boldly into the enemy's camp. It was *not* the Reformers, it was the pope and the clergy, he asserted, who in reality instigated men to refuse obedience to the civil power. They claimed for themselves a superiority to all secular authority. They had presumed to excommunicate kings, and to lay nations under interdict. They refused to bear their share in the ordinary burdens which devolved upon subjects. They declined to submit to the jurisdiction of the secular courts. In open defiance of the example of Christ and the admonition of His Apostle, "Let every soul submit himself unto

the higher powers; whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God;" popes and bishops, monks and friars, had arrogated to themselves an exemption from the authority of the temporal sovereign. Here, Tyndale maintained, was the true fountain of insubordination and rebellion; here were the true apostles of sedition against whom the terror of the civil authority should be wielded. "If," says he, "the office of princes, given them of God, be to take vengeance of evil-doers, then by God's Word are all princes damned [condemned], even as many as give liberty or license unto the spirituality to sin unpunished; and not only to sin unpunished themselves, but also to open sanctuaries, privileged places, churchyards, St. John's holds; yea, and if they come too short unto all these, yet to set forth a *neck-verse* to save all manner trespassers, from the fear of the sword of the vengeance of God, put in the hand of princes to take vengeance of all such."[1] The ambition of the clergy had thrown all civil government into confusion; they had almost monopolised all offices of authority in the State, to the great injury both of religion and of good government.

"Is it not a shame above all shames," asks Tyndale, "and a monstrous thing, that no man should be found able to govern a worldly kingdom save bishops and prelates, that have forsaken the world, and are taken out of the world, and appointed to preach the kingdom of God? . . . To preach God's Word is too much for half a man: and to minister a temporal kingdom is too much for half a man also. Either other requireth a whole man. One therefore cannot well do both. He that avengeth himself on every trifle is not meet to preach the patience of Christ, how that

[1] The clergy, as is well known, had, by long persevering efforts, succeeded in establishing for themselves an exemption from the ordinary civil courts; they had opened sanctuaries of various kinds where criminals might find refuge, and evade the lay courts. To such an extent did this abuse go, that any one who declared that he was, or meant to be, in holy orders, and could, as a proof, repeat the first verse of the fifty-first psalm, might claim to be handed over to the spiritual courts. Hence the popular name for the verse, which often saved a man's neck from the hangman's rope.

a man ought to forgive and to suffer all things. He that is overwhelmed with all manner riches, and doth but seek more daily, is not meet to preach poverty. He that will obey no man, is not meet to preach how we ought to obey all men. . . . Paul saith, 'Woe is me if I preach not.' A terrible saying, verily, for popes, cardinals, and bishops! If he had said, 'Woe be unto me if I fight not and move princes unto war, or if I increase not St. Peter's patrimony, as they call it, it had been a more easy saying for them.'"

These were sharp words, sure to give offence to the English prelates; but these are not the sharpest of Tyndale's utterances in his *Obedience*. General charges, however strong, lack the force of specific and detailed accusations; and Tyndale's most damaging attack upon the Church of Rome, was his detailed and elaborate exposure of the false pretences of "The Apostles of Antichrist."

"Christ, when He had fulfilled His course, anointed His Apostles and disciples with the Spirit, and sent them forth, without all manner disguising [*i.e.*, as he explains it, neither shaven nor shorn, nor anointed with oil], like other men, to preach the atonement and peace which Christ had made between God and man. The Apostles likewise disguised no man, but chose men anointed with the same Spirit; one to preach the Word of God, whom we call, after the Greek tongue, a bishop or a priest; that is, in English, an overseer and an elder. . . . This overseer, because he was taken from his own business and labour, to preach God's Word unto the parish, hath right, by the authority of his office, to challenge an honest living of the parish, as thou mayest see in the Evangelists, and also in Paul. For who will have a servant, and will not give him meat, drink, and raiment, and all things necessary? How they would pay him, whether in money, or assign him so much rent, or in tithes, as the guise now is in many countries, was at their liberty. Likewise in every congregation chose they another after the same example, whom, after the Greek word, we call deacon; that

is to say, in English, a servant or minister, whose office was to help and assist the priest, and to gather up his duty, and to gather for the poor of the parish, which were destitute of friends, and could not work." With this Christian and Apostolic order he contrasts that of Antichrist:—

"ANTICHRIST of another manner hath sent forth his disciples, those 'false anointed,' of which Christ warneth us before, that they should come and show miracles and wonders, even to bring the very elect out of the way, if it were possible. He anointeth them after the manner of the Jews; and shaveth them and sheareth them after the manner of the heathen priests, which serve the idols. He sendeth them forth not with false oil only, but with false names also: for compare their names unto their deeds, and thou shalt find them false. He sendeth them forth, as Paul prophesied of them, with lying signs and wonders. What sign is the anointing? That they be full of the Holy Ghost. Compare them to the signs of the Holy Ghost, which Paul reckoneth, and thou shalt find it a false sign.

"'A bishop must be faultless, the husband of one wife.' 'Nay,' saith the pope, 'the husband of no wife, but the holder of as many concubines as he listeth.' God commandeth all degrees, if they burn, and cannot live chaste, to marry. The pope saith, 'If thou burn, take a dispensation for a concubine, and put her away when thou art old;' or else, as our lawyers say, *Si non caste tamen caute;* that is, 'If ye live not chaste, see ye play the knave secretly.'

"'Harborous' [hospitable]; yea, to whores and bawds; for a poor man shall as soon break his neck as his fast with them, but of the scraps and with the dogs, when dinner is done.

"'Apt to teach,' and, as Peter saith, 'ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that ye have, and that with meekness.' Which thing is signified by the boots which doctors of divinity are created in, because they should be ready always to go through thick and thin, to preach God's Word; and by the bishop's two-horned mitre, which betokeneth the absolute and perfect knowledge that they ought to have in the New Testament and the Old. Be not these false signs? For they beat only, and teach not. 'Yea,' saith the pope, 'if they will not be ruled, cite them to appear; and pose them sharply, what they hold of the pope's power, of his pardons, of his bulls, of purgatory, of ceremonies, of confession, and such like creatures of our most holy father's. If they miss in any point, make heretics of them, and burn them. If they be of mine anointed, and bear my mark, disgrace them (I would say, disgraduate them), and after the ensample of noble Antiochus (2 Macc. vii.), pare the crowns and the fingers of them, and torment them craftily, and for very pain make them deny the truth.' 'But now,' say our bishops, 'because the truth is come too far abroad, and the lay-people begin to smell our wiles, it is best to oppress them with craft secretly, and to tame them in

prison. Yea, let us find the means to have them in the king's prison, and to make treason of such doctrine: yea, we must stir up some war, one where or another, to bring the people into another imagination.' 'If they be gentlemen, abjure them secretly. Curse them four times in the year. Make them afraid of everything; and, namely [especially], to touch mine anointed; and make them to fear the sentence of the Church, suspensions, excommunications and curses. Be they right or wrong, bear them in hand that they are to be feared yet. Preach me and mine authority, and how terrible a thing my curse is, and how black it maketh their souls. On the holidays, which were ordained to preach God's Word, set up long ceremonies, long matins, long masses, and long evensongs, and all in Latin, that they understand not; and roll them in darkness, that ye may lead them whither ye will. And lest such things should be too tedious, sing some, say some, pipe some, ring the bells, and lull them and rock them asleep.' And yet Paul (1 Cor. xiv.) forbiddeth to speak in the church or congregation, save in the tongue that all understand. For the layman thereby is not edified or taught. How shall the layman say Amen (saith Paul) to thy blessing or thanksgiving, when he wotteth not what thou sayest? He wotteth not whether thou bless or curse.

"What then saith the pope? 'What care I for Paul? I command by the virtue of obedience, to read the Gospel in Latin. Let them not pray but in Latin, no, not their *Pater noster*. If any be sick, go also and say them a Gospel, and all in Latin: yea, to the very corn and fruits of the field, in the procession week, preach the Gospel in Latin: make the people believe, that it shall grow the better.' It is verily as good to preach it to swine as to men, if thou preach it in a tongue they understand not. How shall I prepare myself to God's commandments? How shall I be thankful to Christ for His kindness? How shall I believe the truth and promises which God hath sworn, while thou tellest them unto me in a tongue which I understand not?

"What then saith my lord of Canterbury to a priest that would have had the New Testament gone forth in English? 'What,' saith he, 'wouldest thou that the lay-people should wete [know] what we do?'

"'No fighter:' which, I suppose, is signified by the cross that is borne before the high prelates, and borne before them in procession. Is that also not a false sign? What realm can be in peace for such turmoilers? What so little a parish is it, but they will pick one quarrel or another with them, either for some surplice, chrisom, or mortuary, either for one trifle or other, and cite them to the Arches? Traitors they are to all creatures, and have a secret conspiration between themselves. One craft they have, to make many kingdoms, and small; and to nourish old titles or quarrels; that they may ever move them to war at their pleasure; and if much lands by any chance fall to one man, ever to cast a bone in the way, that he shall never be able to obtain it, as we now see in the emperor. Why? For as long as the kings be small, if God would open the eyes of any to set a

reformation in his realm, then should the pope interdict his land, and send in other princes to conquer it.

"'Not given to filthy lucre, but abhorring covetousness;' and, as Peter saith, 'Taking the oversight of them, not as though ye were compelled thereunto, but willingly; not for desire of filthy lucre, but of a good mind; not as though ye were lords over the parishes.' Over the parishes, quoth he! O Peter, Peter, thou wast too long a fisher; thou wast never brought up at the Arches, neither wast Master of the Rolls, nor yet Chancellor of England. They are not content to reign over king and emperor, and the whole earth; but challenge authority also in heaven and in hell. It is not enough for them to reign over all that are quick, but have created them a purgatory, to reign also over the dead, and to have one kingdom more than God Himself hath. 'But that ye be an ensample to the flock,' saith Peter; 'and when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive an incorruptible crown of glory.' This 'abhorring of covetousness' is signified, as I suppose, by shaving and shearing of the hair, that they have no superfluity. But is not this also a false sign? Yea, verily, it is to them a remembrance to shear and shave, to heap benefice upon benefice, promotion upon promotion, dignity upon dignity, bishopric upon bishopric, with pluralities, unions and TOT QUOTS.

"First, by the authority of the Gospel, they that preach the Word of God in every parish, and other necessary ministers, have right to challenge an honest living like unto one of the brethren, and therewith ought to be content. Bishops and priests that preach not, or that preach aught save God's Word, are none of Christ's, nor of His anointing; but servants of the beast, whose mark they bear, whose word they preach, whose law they maintain clean against God's law, and with their false sophistry give him greater power than God ever gave to His Son Christ.

"But they, as insatiable beasts, not unmindful why they were shaven and shorn, because they will stand at no man's grace, or be in any man's danger, have gotten into their own hands, first the tithe or tenth of all the realm; and then, I suppose within a little, or altogether, the third foot of all the temporal lands.

"Mark well how many parsonages or vicarages are there in the realm, which at the least have a plow-land apiece. Then note the lands of bishops, abbots, priors, nuns, knights of St. John's, cathedral churches, colleges, chauntries, and free-chapels. For though the house fall in decay, and the ordinance of the founder be lost, yet will not they lose the lands. What cometh once in, may never more out. They make a free-chapel of it; so that he which enjoyeth it shall do nought therefore. Besides all this, how many chaplains do gentlemen find at their own cost, in their houses? How many sing for souls by testaments? Then the proving of testaments, the prizing of goods, the bishop of Canterbury's prerogative; is that not much through the realm in a year? Four offering days, and privy tithes. There is no servant, but that he shall pay somewhat of his wages. None shall receive the body of Christ at Easter,

be he never so poor a beggar, or never so young a lad or maid, but they must pay somewhat for it. Then mortuaries for forgotten tithes, as they say. And yet what parson or vicar is there that will forget to have a pigeon-house, to peck up somewhat both at sowing-time and harvest, when corn is ripe? They will forget nothing. No man shall die in their debt; or if any man do, he shall pay it when he is dead. They will lose nothing. Why? It is God's; it is not theirs. It is St. Hubert's rents, St. Alban's lands, St. Edmund's right, St. Peter's patrimony, say they, and none of ours. Item, if a man die in another man's parish, besides that he must pay at home a mortuary for forgotten tithes, he must there pay also the best that he there hath; whether it be an horse of twenty pound, or how good soever he be; either a chain of gold of an hundred marks, or five hundred pounds, if it so chance. It is much, verily, for so little pains-taking in confession, and in ministering the sacraments. Then bead-rolls. Item chrysome, churchings, banns, weddings, offering at weddings, offering at buryings, offering to images, offering of wax and lights, which come to their vantage; besides the superstitious waste of wax in torches and tapers throughout the land. Then brotherhoods and pardoners. What get they also by confessions? Yea, and many enjoin penance, to give a certain [sum] for to have so many masses said, and desire to provide a chaplain themselves; soul-masses, dirges, month-minds, year-minds, All-souls'-day, and trentals. The mother-church, and the high-altar, must have somewhat in every testament. Offerings at priests' first masses. Item, no man is professed, of whatsoever religion it be, but he must bring somewhat. The hallowing, or rather conjuring, of churches, chapels, altars, super-altars, chalice, vestments, and bells. Then book, bell, candlestick, organs, chalice, vestments, copes, altar-cloths, surplices, towels, basins, ewers, ship, censer, and all manner ornament, must be found them freely; they will not give a mite thereunto. Last of all, what swarms of begging friars are there! The parson sheareth, the vicar shaveth, the parish priest polleth, the friar scrapeth, and the pardoner pareth; we lack but a butcher to pull off the skin.

"What get they in their spiritual law, as they call it, in a year, at the Arches and in every diocese? What get the commissaries and officials with their somners and apparitors, by bawdery in a year? Shall ye not find curates enough which, to flatter the commissaries and officials withal, that they may go quit themselves, shall open unto them the confessions of the richest of their parishes; whom they cite privily, and lay to their charges secretly? If they desire to know their accusers, 'Nay,' say they, 'the matter is known well enough, and to more than ye are ware of. Come, lay your hand on the book; if ye forswear yourself, we shall bring proofs, we will handle you, we will make an ensample of you.' Oh, how terrible are they! 'Come and swear,' say they, 'that you will be obedient unto our injunctions.' And by that craft wring they their purses, and make them drop, as long as there is a penny in them. In three or four years shall they in those offices get enough to pay for a bishop's bull.

What other thing are these in a realm save horse-leeches, and even very maggots, cankers, and caterpillars, which devour no more but all that is green; and those wolves which Paul prophesied should come, and should not spare the flock; and which Christ said should come in lambs' skins; and bade us beware of them, and judge them by their works?

"Though, as I have before sufficiently proved, a Christian man must suffer all things, be it never so great unright, as long as it is not against God's commandment; neither is it lawful for him to cast any burden off his back by his own authority, till God pull it off, which laid it on for our deservings; yet ought the kings everywhere to defend their realms from such oppression, if they were Christians; which is seldom seen, and is a hard thing verily, though not impossible. For, alas! they be captives or ever they be kings, yea, almost ere they be born. No man may be suffered about them but flatterers, and such as are first sworn true unto our most holy fathers the bishops; that is to say, false to God and man.

"If any of the nobles of the realm be true to the king, and so bold that he dare counsel him that which should be to his honour and for the wealth of the realm; they will wait a season for him, as men say; they will provide a ghostly father for him. God bring their wickedness to light! There is no mischief whereof they are not the root; nor bloodshed but through their cause, either by their counsel, or in that they preach not true obedience, and teach not the people to fear God. If any faithful servant be in all the court, he shall have twenty spies waiting upon him; he shall be cast out of the court, or, as the saying is, conveyed to Calais, and made a captain or an ambassador; he shall be kept far enough from the king's presence.

"The kings ought, I say, to remember that they are in God's stead, and ordained of God, not for themselves, but for the wealth of their subjects. Let them remember that their subjects are their brethren, their flesh and blood, members of their own body, and even their own-selves in Christ. Therefore ought they to pity them, and to rid them from such tyranny, which increaseth more and more daily. And though that the kings by the falsehood of the bishops and abbots, be sworn to defend such liberties; yet ought they not to keep their oaths, but to break them; forasmuch as they are unright and clean against God's ordinance, and even but cruel oppression, contrary unto brotherly love and charity. Moreover, the spiritual officer ought to punish no sin; but and if any sin break out, the king is ordained to punish it, and they not; but to preach and exhort him to fear God, and that they sin not.

"And let the kings put down some of their tyranny, and turn some unto a common wealth. If the tenth part of such tyranny were given the king yearly, and laid up in the shire-towns, against the realm had need, what would it grow to in certain years? Moreover, one king, one law, is God's ordinance in every realm. Therefore ought not the king to suffer them to have a several law by themselves, and to draw his subjects thither. It is not meet, will they say, that a spiritual man should be

judged of a worldly or temporal man. O abomination! see how they divide and separate themselves: if the layman be of the world, so is he not of God! If he believe in Christ, then is he a member of Christ, Christ's brother, Christ's flesh, Christ's blood, Christ's spouse, coheir with Christ, and hath His Spirit in earnest, and is also spiritual. If they would rob us of the Spirit of God, why should they fear to rob us of worldly goods? Because thou art put in office to preach God's Word, art thou therefore no more one of the brethren? Is the Mayor of London no more one of the city, because he is the chief officer? Is the king no more of the realm, because he is head thereof? The king is in the room of God; and his law is God's law, and nothing but the law of nature and natural equity, which God graved in the hearts of men. Yet Antichrist is too good to be judged by the law of God; he must have a new, of his own making. It were meet, verily, that they went to no law at all. No more needed they, if they would study to preach God's Word truly, and be contented with sufficient, and to be like one of their brethren.

"If any question arose about the faith of the Scripture, then let them judge by the manifest and open Scriptures, not excluding the lay-men; for there are many found among the lay-men, which are as wise as the officers. Or else, when the officer dieth, how could we put another in his room? Wilt thou so teach twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty years, that no man shall have knowledge or judgment in God's Word save thou only? Is it not a shame that we Christians come so oft to church in vain, when he of fourscore years old knoweth no more than he that was born yesterday?"

Even this by no means exhausts the catalogue of charges which Tyndale brings against the clergy. They had corrupted the teaching of Holy Scripture regarding the sacraments. Baptism, and "the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ," had promises annexed to them,[1] and were, therefore, true sacraments; but to these they had added other ceremonies which had no right to the title, and which had been the source of many abuses. They had invented purgatory; they had introduced pilgrimages and worshipping of saints, for the sake of the offerings. They had debased prayer by selling it for money. Above all, they had obscured the meaning of Scripture, by overlooking the literal sense, and inventing imaginary "tropological, allegorical, and anagogical senses."

[1] Tyndale expresses himself so briefly and cautiously on the subject of the Holy Communion, that it is impossible to decide whether he still held Luther's opinion or had adopted Zwingle's.

Tyndale had already, in treating of the sacraments and prayers to saints, shown himself far in advance of the position which the English Reformers were as yet prepared to take up; and his clearness of view on the subject of the true interpretation of Scripture, is worthy of more than a mere passing note. "Scripture," he says, with excellent judgment, far beyond the theology of his time, "*hath but one sense*, which is the literal sense. And that literal sense is the root and ground of all, and the anchor that never faileth, whereunto if thou cleave thou canst never err or go out of the way. And if thou leave the literal sense, thou canst not but go out of the way.... Allegory proveth nothing, neither can do. For it is not the Scripture, but an ensample or a similitude borrowed of the Scripture, to declare a text or a conclusion of the Scripture more expressly, and to root it and grave it in the heart. For a similitude, or an ensample, doth print a thing much deeper in the wits of a man than doth a plain speaking, and leaveth behind him [it] as it were a sting to prick him forward and to awake him withal. Moreover, if I could not prove with an open text that which the allegory doth express, then were the allegory a thing to be jested at, and of no greater value than a tale of Robin Hood." Such words as these may seem mere reiteration of truisms to a modern reader; but in Tyndale's time, when all true theology had been lost in a wilderness of wild, allegorical, and fanciful interpretations of Scripture, these assertions, which pointed men to the only true method of expounding the Word of God, were not commonplaces, but startling novelties, the first enunciation of a true system of exegesis.

One other passage may be cited as a specimen at once of Tyndale's clear grasp of his subject, and of the vigorous logic, diversified with occasional touches of grim irony, with which he conducts his argument:—

"The spirituality increaseth daily. More prelates, more priests, more monks, friars, canons, nuns, and more heretics, (I would say heremites,) with like draff. Set before thee the increase of St. Francis' disciples in

so few years. Reckon how many thousands, yea, how many twenty thousands, not disciples only, but whole cloisters, are sprung out of hell of them in so little space. Pattering of prayers increaseth daily. Their service, as they call it, waxeth longer and longer, and the labour of their lips greater; new saints, new service, new feasts, and new holidays. What take all these away? Sin? Nay; for we see the contrary by experience, and that sin groweth as they grow. But they take away first God's Word, with faith, hope, peace, unity, love, and concord; then house and land, rent and fee, tower and town, goods and cattle, and the very meat out of men's mouths. All these live by purgatory. When other weep for their friends, they sing merrily; when other lose their friends, they get friends. The pope, with all his pardons, is grounded on purgatory. Priests, monks, canons, friars, with all other swarms of hypocrites, do but empty purgatory, and fill hell. Every mass, say they, delivereth one soul out of purgatory. If that were true, yea, if ten masses were enough for one soul, yet were the parish priests and curates of every parish sufficient to scour purgatory: all the other costly workmen might be well spared.

"The pope, which so fast looseth and purgeth in purgatory, cannot, with all the loosings and purgations that he hath, either loose or purge our appetites, and lust, and rebellion that is in us against the law of God. And yet the purging of them is the right purgatory. If he cannot purge them that are alive, wherewith purgeth he them that are dead? The Apostles knew no other ways to purge, but through preaching God's Word, which Word only is that that purgeth the heart, as thou mayest see, (John xv.) 'Ye are pure,' saith Christ, 'through the Word.' Now the pope preacheth not to them whom they feign to lie in purgatory, no more than he doth to us that are alive. How then purgeth he them? *The pope is kin to Robin Goodfellow; which sweepeth the house, washeth the dishes, and purgeth all by night; but when day cometh, there is nothing found clean.*"

The peroration is not unworthy of what had preceded:—

"Remember that Christ is the end of all things. He only is our resting-place, and He is our peace. For as there is no salvation in any other name, so is there no peace in any other name. Thou shalt never have rest in thy soul, neither shall the worm of conscience ever cease to gnaw thine heart, till thou come at Christ; till thou hear the glad tidings, how that God for His sake hath forgiven thee all freely. If thou trust in thy works, there is no rest. Thou shalt think, I have not done enough. Have I done it with so great love as I should do? Was I so glad in doing, as I would be to receive help at my need? I have left this or that undone; and such like. If thou trust in confession, then shalt thou think, Have I told all? Have I told all the circumstances? Did I repent enough? Had I as great sorrow in my repentance for my sins, as I had pleasure in doing them? Likewise in our holy pardons and pilgrimages gettest thou no rest. For thou seest

that the very gods themselves, which sell their pardon so good cheap, or some whiles give them freely for glory sake, trust not therein themselves. They build colleges, and make perpetuities, to be prayed for, for ever; and lade the lips of their beadmen, or chaplains, with so many masses, and diriges, and so long service, that I have known of some that have bid the devil take their founders' souls, for very impatiency and weariness of so painful labour.

"As pertaining to good deeds, therefore, do the best thou canst, and desire God to give strength to do better daily; but in Christ put thy trust, and in the pardon and promises that God hath made thee for His sake; and on that rock build thine house, and there dwell. For there only shalt thou be sure from all storms and tempests, and from all wily assaults of our wicked spirits, which study with all falsehead to undermine us. And the God of all mercy give thee grace so to do, unto whom be glory for ever! Amen."

The extracts which have been given will enable the reader to form a tolerably adequate notion of the style and character of the largest and most elaborate of all Tyndale's original works. *The Obedience*, it is almost superfluous to remark, after such specimens, is characterised by plain bold speaking. The trumpet gives forth no uncertain sound. Nor is it the production of a man who was simply dissatisfied with the state of religion around him, and who was longing for redress and reformation. Tyndale writes as one who had not only a keen eye to detect the abuses that everywhere existed, but who had also the rarer faculty of discerning how and whence it was possible to provide a remedy. He was not simply, as some Reformers have been, destructive; he could not only assist in the overthrow of error and superstition; he saw clearly how the fabric could be reconstructed on a firmer foundation. He had, in the seclusion of his exile, seen and thought much, and had carefully examined all the opinions which formed his religious belief; and as the result, he had to a wonderful extent divested himself of all the ecclesiastical traditions in which he had been "noselled."

Nor is it unworthy of notice that he wields the English language with a strength and facility, such as make his writings easy and pleasant reading even in our day. There is no trace of obsolescence about *The Obedience;* which

contains many passages worthy of the writer to whom we owe the plain, strong English of our Bible. Tyndale was no vulgar railer, like Roye, although his language is sharp, and his condemnation sufficiently energetic. If there be any to whom it appears that he sometimes degenerates into unjustifiable violence, the present biographer does not venture to apologise for violent personal abuse, whether used by Tyndale or by his opponents; he ventures, however, to suggest that violence is a relative term, and that the man who in calm curiosity looks at the field of battle when all is peace, and the verdure of three centuries hides the desolation of the combat, is not precisely the fittest person to gauge the excitement of the struggle, when life and death were in the issue of every blow.

To us, the gigantic papal system of the sixteenth century, that wonderful *imperium in imperio*, with its proud claims, its tens of thousands of satellites, its endless abuses, is in general little more than some extinct geological system, which we study with the mild excitement of antiquarian curiosity. To Tyndale it was a terrible chimera, devouring the life of all religion and all thought; or a huge, pitiless machine, remorselessly pursuing its own purposes, reckless of the lives and happiness of those who stood in its onward path; or, as he himself would probably have preferred to say, it was very Antichrist, arrayed in lies, and armed with vengeance against all the true followers of Christ.

The reader is, of course, prepared to be told that *The Obedience* was severely condemned by the English prelates; it assailed them, root and branch, and they visited it with no measured condemnation in return. Sir Thomas More pours out the full vials of his wrath upon "that frantic book of *Obedience* . . . a book able to make a Christian man that would believe it, leave off all good Christian virtues, and lose the merit of his Christendom . . . a book wherein the writer raileth at large against all popes, against all kings, against all prelates, against all priests, against all religions, against all

the laws, against all saints, against the Sacraments of Christ's Church, against all virtuous works, against all divine service, and, finally, against all thing that good is . . . a malicious book, wherein the writer showeth himself so puffed up with the poison of pride, malice, and envy, that it is more than marvel that the skin can hold together; for he hath not only *sowked* out the most poison that he could find through all Luther's books, or take of him by mouth, and all that hath *spette* out in this book, but hath also in many things far passed his master, running forth so mad for malice that he fareth as though he heard not his own voice."[1]

In proportion to the violence with which More and the prelates condemned the book, was the esteem in which it was held by those in England who sympathised with the doctrines of the Reformation. Full of consolation and encouragement, it seems to have contributed in a marked manner to revive the sinking spirits of the English Reformers, who had been awed into timidity and retractation by the vigorous measures of the bishops. It is certainly noteworthy that Bilney, when, after his lamentable fall, he felt his spiritual strength again returning to him, and set out, as he so pathetically expressed it, "to go up to Jerusalem," carried with him, apparently as powerful sources of support, Tyndale's New Testament and his *Obedience of a Christian Man.*

And Bilney was not the only one who derived strength to be faithful unto the end from the noble teaching of Tyndale. Bainham, who, like Bilney, had been terrified into recantation, was filled with remorse for his apostasy; and after weighing the matter carefully in his heart, and, no doubt, imploring strength from the Lord whom he had denied, and now wished to confess before men, "he came the next Sunday to St. Austin's with the *New Testament* in his hand, in English, and *The Obedience of a Christian Man* in his bosom; and stood up there before the people in his pew, declaring openly, with

[1] Sir Thomas More's *Confutation:* the reader will perceive that Sir Thomas was, to say the least, quite a match for Tyndale in violent language.

weeping tears, that he had denied God; and prayed all the people to forgive him, and to beware of his weakness, and not to do as he had done." "After this," adds the Martyrologist, "he was strengthened, and bore the cruel death by fire with remarkable courage."

But the utility of Tyndale's work must not be measured even by such instances as these, noble proof though they be of its power to inspire fresh life into the fainting hearts of the English Reformers. *The Obedience* brought for the first time into prominence the two great truths which constitute the very essence of the English Reformation—the supreme authority of Scripture in the Church, and the supreme authority of the king in the State. Truths such as these, so sweeping in their application, so obvious to the comprehension, when set forth with all Tyndale's wonderful force of expression and clearness of argument, at once took root in the minds of the English people. From this time forward the Reformers in England had a definite aim and purpose; and the goal being once placed before them, their progress became steady and rapid. A few years of strife and confusion, and the clergy were shorn of their civil independence; the king was acknowledged supreme head over all subjects, clerical and lay; the Holy Scripture was recognised as the ultimate standard by which all controversies were to be decided; and those principles were generally received, of which the English Reformation was the natural result, and the normal, though, perhaps, not the complete, development.

To this consummation Tyndale's writings most powerfully contributed; it was he that pointed out the goal towards which their course was to be directed; it was his works that gave clearness and distinctness to what had formerly been but vague feelings of dissatisfaction with the existing state of things, and indefinite longings after their improvement. The impulse which he communicated was propagated by others; in the writings of such men as Latimer the thoughts and words of Tyndale can perpetually be traced; and thus the

distant exile continued through life to be the prophet and instructor of that country which he was never again to see; and was one of the prime originators and directors of that mighty movement in England which he was not himself spared to witness. For to the end he worked without reward, and like the Jewish patriarch, only saw in distant vision that promised land which he was not to be allowed to enter.

To what has already been written of the influence, open and secret, actual and probable, which *The Obedience* exercised in England, an addition has still to be made which savours more of the sentimental excitement of a love-story than of the calm dignity of history, and yet rests on trustworthy authority. Of all Englishmen the man whom it was most desirable, and at the same time, most unlikely that the book should reach, was the man whose strong hands then swayed the destinies of England. To him, also, however, in a strange manner the words of Tyndale were conveyed, through the operation of that lawless passion which was to be overruled for the accomplishment of such mighty events. The tale, which sounds like an extract from a novel, and reads best in the simple language of the old memorialist who has recorded it,[1] is here subjoined for the reader's benefit.

"Upon the Lady Anne [Boleyn] waited a fair young gentlewoman named Mrs. Gaynsford; and in her service was also retained Mr. George Zouch, father to Sir John Zouch. This gentleman, of a comely sweet person, a Zouch indeed [Zouch=douce=dulcis=sweet], was a suitor in way of marriage to the said young lady; and among other love-tricks, once he plucked from her a book in English, called Tyndale's *Obedience*, which the Lady Anne had lent her to read. About which time the Cardinal had given commandment to the prelates, and especially to Dr. Sampson, Dean of the King's Chapel, that they should have a vigilant eye over all people for such books that they came not abroad; that so, as much as might be, they might not come to the King's reading.

[1] Strype's *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, Vol. I. pp. 172, etc.

But this which he most feared fell out upon this occasion. 'For Mr. Zouch'—I use the words of the MS.—[Foxe's MSS.], 'was so ravished with the Spirit of God, speaking now as well in the heart of the reader as first it did in the heart of the maker of the book, that he was never well but when he was reading of that book. Mrs. Gaynsford wept, because she could not get the book from her wooer, and he was as ready to weep to deliver it. But see the providence of God: Mr. Zouch, standing in the chapel before Dr. Sampson, ever reading upon this book, and the Dean never having his eye off the book in the gentleman's hand, called him to him, and then snatched the book out of his hand, asked his name, and whose man he was. And the book he delivered to the Cardinal. In the meantime, the Lady Anne asketh her woman for the book. She on her knees told all the circumstances. The Lady Anne showed herself not sorry nor angry with either of the two. But, said she, "Well, it shall be the dearest book that ever the Dean or Cardinal took away." The noble woman goes to the King, and upon her knees she desireth the King's help for her book. Upon the King's token [the royal signet probably], the book was restored. And now bringing the book to him, she besought his Grace most tenderly to read it. The King did so, and delighted in the book; for, saith he, "*This book is for me and all kings to read.*" And in a little time the King, by the help of this virtuous lady, by the means aforesaid, had his eyes opened to the truth, to search the truth, to advance God's religion and glory, to abhor the Pope's doctrine, his lies, his pomp and pride, to deliver his subjects out of the Egyptian darkness, the Babylonian bonds, that the Pope had brought him and his subjects under.'"

It may seem preposterous to look for any formal confirmation of the truth of this "love-trick," yet singularly enough it is corroborated, in at least its substance, by the narrative of George Wyatt, grandson of the poet, who was a contemporary of Anne Boleyn, and whose name, indeed, has been unjustly associated with that of the unfortunate Queen as having been

one of the partners of her guilt. He repeats what, with variations in detail, is essentially the same story. Anne Boleyn it seems had, notwithstanding all prohibitions, obtained and read *The Obedience*,[1] "marking with her nail such passages" as seemed worthy of the King's knowledge; her maid took up the book as it lay in a window, and her suitor in his turn walked forth reading it, and met one of Wolsey's men, who borrowed the book and carried it to the Cardinal. Anne was informed of what had happened, and immediately told the King how she had been treated and what was the nature of the book thus seized. "And," says Wyatt, "she was but newly come from the King, but [when] the Cardinal came in with the book in his hands to make complaints of certain points in it that he knew the King would not like of [so that Wolsey also had read *The Obedience*], and withal to take occasion with him against those that countenanced such books in general, and specially women, and, as might be thought, with mind to go farther against the Queen [so Wyatt calls Anne Boleyn, but she was not yet Queen] more directly, if he had perceived the King agreeable to his meaning. But the King that somewhat afore distasted [disliked] the Cardinal, finding the notes the Queen had made, all turned the more to hasten his ruin, which was also furthered on all sides."

No truer criticism was ever pronounced on *The Obedience* than that here ascribed to Henry, that it was a book for him and all kings to read; and whatever deduction may be made from Foxe's panegyric, on the score of his partiality having led him to attribute an exaggerated influence to Tyndale's work, it cannot be doubted that it was perused by Henry most opportunely at a momentous crisis, when he was about

[1] See Wyatt's narrative in Singer's Edition of Cavendish's *Wolsey*, Vol. II. *The Obedience* is not specified; Wyatt merely says that "it was a book of those controversies then waged concerning religion, and specially of the authority of the Pope and his clergy, and of their doings against Kings and States;" a description which leaves no reasonable doubt that *The Obedience* was intended.

to assume into his own hands the reins of power which Wolsey had hitherto held; and whether or not the future policy of the English monarch was in any way derived from the inspiration of Tyndale's pages, it is unquestionable that in *The Obedience* we can see as in prophetic forecast the outlines of those great measures which have made the reign of Henry for ever memorable.

CHAPTER VIII.

MARBURG; ANTWERP; HAMBURG; PUBLICATION OF THE "PENTATEUCH" AND "THE PRACTICE OF PRELATES."

A.D. 1529—1530.

GEORGE JOYE, in his ill-tempered reply to Tyndale, has ventured to speak of the illustrious martyr as if he were idle and averse to work. "All this long while," says he, speaking of the period at which we have now arrived, "Tyndale slept, for nothing came from him so far as I could perceive."[1] Whether George Joye lived in such absolute unconsciousness of all the occurrences of the day as these words seem to imply; whether he simply used them to annoy Tyndale; or whether he merely intended to assert that Tyndale had taken no steps to fulfil the promise of revising his translation of the New Testament, which he had so solemnly made at the close of the Worms octavo, need not be here discussed; the reader, who has seen in the previous chapter something of the literary labours of Tyndale during the year 1528, will scarcely feel disposed to acquiesce in the accuracy of Joye's insinuation that Tyndale was "asleep." His life, since he left England, had been one of ceaseless exertion; and the first rest from his labour was that which came to him some few years later in prison.

The Parable of the Wicked Mammon and *The Obedience of a Christian Man* were not the sole occupation of Tyndale during the year 1528; possibly he might even have been inclined to look upon them not as, properly speaking, his work, but rather as a species of relaxation from what was the

[1] Joye's *Apology and Answer*, Arber's reprint, p. 21.

real labour to which his whole energies were devoted. For he had resolved to complete the boon of which he had already bestowed upon his countrymen so precious an instalment, by adding to his translation of the New Testament a translation of the Old. Perhaps this had been included by him in that famous declaration of his at Sodbury, that if God spared him, he would cause the boy that driveth the plough to know more of Holy Scripture than the clergy of England did; at all events, he had been prosecuting his studies in Hebrew with great diligence ever since his arrival on the Continent, and this was beyond all question with the view of employing his knowledge in the translation of the Old Testament from the original.

Traces of his Hebrew studies have already appeared in some of the extracts selected from *The Wicked Mammon;* and in *The Obedience* there are several passages which give plain indication of the manner in which Tyndale was then engaged. The freedom from disturbance which he enjoyed at Marburg, and the assistance of his favourite disciple, Fryth, who, as we believe, arrived before the close of 1528, were eminently favourable for the accomplishment of Tyndale's design; and by the end of 1529 the Pentateuch was completed, and was ready for Hans Luft. It has been supposed by some that the books of Genesis and Deuteronomy were printed early in that year and sent to England; but of this, as will appear subsequently, there is no sufficient evidence. In 1530, however, it is certain the five books of Moses were printed and circulated very early in the year; and the completion and final revision of this important instalment of the Old Testament would certainly occupy Tyndale during the greater part of the year 1529. The Pentateuch is not very much inferior in size to the whole of the New Testament; Tyndale was doubtless not so familiar with Hebrew as with Greek; his translation was performed with most scrupulous care; and this work must therefore have been almost the chief employment of his energies since the completion of his

New Testament. Of the character and merits of the translation of the Pentateuch we shall have to speak at a later period; at present some reference must be made to the other literary labours ascribed to Tyndale during that year 1529, at which we have now arrived.

It would almost appear, if we may trust the vague rumours mentioned in contemporary documents, that Tyndale published at this time two, or even three, works, all on the subject of marriage, viz., *An Exposition of the Seventh Chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, another treatise called *The Matrimony of Tyndale*, and possibly even a third, entitled, *The Christian State of Matrimony*.[1] All three, if they were really distinct treatises, have been entirely lost, except a few fragments preserved in Warham's proclamation; and it seems a legitimate conjecture that the three titles were simply different names for one and the same book, just as *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon* was sometimes called a treatise on *Justification by Faith*. The formal name of the work was doubtless that first given, *An Exposition of the Seventh Chapter of First Corinthians*, and from the subject of the book it was popularly known as *The Matrimony of Tyndale*. It is not, however, certain that Tyndale was the author of this work. It was published anonymously, as we learn from the testimony of Sir Thomas More, and was by some persons supposed to be the work of Tyndale's *quondam* amanuensis, William Roye. The mere fact of the work appearing anonymously, at a time when Tyndale was especially careful to prefix his name to his writings, for the express purpose of not being made responsible for anything that proceeded from Roye, seems to make it extremely doubtful whether his contemporaries were not mistaken in their conjecture as to the author of the book.[2]

[1] See the three names in Warham's *Proclamation* in Wilkins, Vol. III. p. 728; the Preacher's Bill, which follows; and the *Proclamation against Heretics*, Foxe, Vol. IV. p. 676.

[2] Preface to Sir Thomas More's *Confutation*.

If we may trust the extracts given by Warham, and stigmatised by him as "ungodly and erroneous," some of the opinions advocated in the lost book on Matrimony were somewhat peculiar, and such as would not be likely to meet with general acceptance at the present day in Protestant England, any more than they did in the Catholic England of Henry the Eighth. But the truth is, that on this subject Tyndale did unquestionably hold some very strange opinions;[1] and no argument against the authenticity of the book can be founded on the fact that it enunciates views which we should not like to associate with the name of our great translator. Enough, however, has already been said of a work which no one has seen, which can only be criticised conjecturally, and which has an exceedingly doubtful claim to be regarded as the production of Tyndale.[2]

Hitherto, we have had frequent occasion to remark the obscurity which seems to surround all Tyndale's personal history. Apart from his writings, we know scarcely anything of him; and the story of his life consequently wants that variety of incident which appeals so forcibly to human sympathy, and communicates to a biography its chief and deepest interest. Just at this precise crisis, however, of Tyndale's life, when the reader is almost wishing that some enemy, prying and communicative like Cochloeus, but without his power to give annoyance, had lived in the neighbourhood of Marburg, the old English chronicler Hall comes to our help, and affords us, if only we can perfectly trust his narrative, the first definite

[1] For example, that the marriage of brothers and sisters is not so unnatural as some other alliances (*e.g.*, a man with his uncle's wife), and that in some cases it might be permitted. See his *Practice of Prelates*.

[2] Christopher Anderson gives a detailed description of the Exposition, as if he had seen and examined it. It had prefixed to it, he says, "An Exhortation to the diligent study of Scripture, made by Erasmus Roterodamus, and translated into English," and at the end was the colophon, "At Malborow, in the land of Hesse, 1529, XX day of June, by me, Hans Luft." But, notwithstanding this minute description, the book is lost, and Anderson never saw it. It is perhaps right to add that in the list of prohibited books in Bonner's Register, and in the Lambeth MSS. 306, *The Matrimony*, and the *Exposition on Corinthians, Chapter VII.*, are enumerated as distinct works.

glimpse of Tyndale since we saw him sailing up the Rhine to Worms.

To understand Hall's narrative, it may be premised that in the summer of 1529 negotiations were carried on at Cambray to conclude, if possible, the long warfare that had been waged between Francis I. and Charles V. At these negotiations Sir Thomas More and Tunstal were present to watch over the interests of England; and through their instrumentality a treaty was signed between England and the German Empire, one provision of which was especially directed against the printing of heretical books in either country for circulation in the other. The treaty of Cambray was concluded on the 5th of August; and the English representatives were then at liberty to return to their native land. Instead, however, of returning, as was natural, by the shortest route, which lay through the English seaport of Calais, Tunstal made a *détour* by Antwerp, in order to signalise himself by some extensive seizure of Tyndale's New Testaments, just as Sir Thomas More had signalised himself by his famous *Dialogue* in refutation of the opinions of Luther and Tyndale. It may have been about the middle of August when Tunstal arrived at Antwerp, full of his purpose; and by a singular coincidence Tyndale also was there, and may perhaps have caught a last glimpse of that "still Saturn," whom he certainly had small reason to love. What actually did occur cannot be better told than in the quaint words of the simple chronicler:—

"Here it is to be remembered that at this present time William Tyndale had newly translated and imprinted the New Testament in English; and the Bishop of London, not pleased with the translation thereof, debated with himself how he might compass and devise to destroy that false and erroneous translation (as he said); and so it happened that one Augustine Packington, a merchant and mercer of London, and of a great honesty, the same time was in Antwerp where the Bishop then was, and this Packington was a man that highly favoured Tyndale, but to the Bishop utterly showed himself to the con-

trary. The Bishop, desirous to have his purpose brought to pass, communed of the New Testaments, and how gladly he would buy them. Packington, then, hearing that [what] he wished for, said unto the Bishop, 'My lord, if it be your pleasure, I can in this matter do more, I dare say, than most of the merchants of England that are here; for I know the Dutchmen and strangers that have bought them of Tyndale and have them here to sell; so that if it be your lordship's pleasure to pay for them (for otherwise I cannot come by them, but I must disburse money for them), I will then assure you to have every book of them that is imprinted and is here unsold.' The Bishop, thinking he had God by the toe, when indeed he had, as after he thought, the Devil by the fist, said, 'Gentle Mr. Packington, do your diligence and get them; and with all my heart I will pay for them whatsoever they cost you, for the books are erroneous and nought, and I intend surely to destroy them all, and to burn them at Paul's Cross.' Augustine Packington *came to William Tyndale*, and said, 'William, I know thou art a poor man, and hast a heap of New Testaments and books by thee, for the which thou hast both endangered thy friends and beggared thyself; and I have now gotten thee a merchant, which with ready money shall despatch thee of all that thou hast, if you think it so profitable for yourself.' 'Who is the merchant?' said Tyndale. 'The Bishop of London,' said Packington. 'Oh, that is because he will burn them,' said Tyndale. 'Yea, marry,' quoth Packington. 'I am the gladder,' said Tyndale, 'for these two benefits shall come thereof: I shall get money to bring myself out of debt, and the whole world will cry out against the burning of God's Word; and the overplus of the money that shall remain to me shall make me more studious to correct the said New Testament, and so newly to imprint the same once again, and I trust the second will much better like you than ever did the first.' And so, forward went the bargain; the Bishop had the books; Packington had the thanks; and Tyndale had the money."

The reader feels instinctively that this story has been somewhat embellished by old Hall, who loved a joke almost as much as a city feast or a royal progress; and it is probably unadvisable to place implicit confidence in all the details. There seems, however, no sufficient reason for rejecting the main facts of the story, which are in perfect keeping with all that is known of Tunstal's character and proceedings; for he considered himself specially commissioned to condemn and destroy Tyndale's translation, and nothing is more probable than that he should avail himself of his proximity to Antwerp to achieve distinction for himself by an extensive seizure of the books which so much distressed his peace of mind. His friend and fellow Commissioner, Sir Thomas More, understood the principles of political economy better, and had remonstrated with Tunstal upon the folly of his contemplated purchase, but in vain; some time elapsed before the Bishop was convinced that he had effected nothing by his fruitless expenditure.

"After this," the story continues, "Tyndale corrected the same New Testaments again, and caused them to be newly imprinted, so that they came thick and threefold over into England. When the Bishop perceived that, he sent for Packington, and said to him, 'How cometh this, that there are so many New Testaments abroad? You promised me that you would buy them all.' Then answered Packington, 'Surely, I bought all that were to be had: but I perceive they have printed more since. I see it will never be better so long as they have letters and stamps [for printing with]: wherefore you were best to buy the stamps too, and so you shall be sure:' at which answer the bishop smiled, and so the matter ended.

"In short space after, it fortuned that George Constantine was apprehended by Sir Thomas More, who was then Chancellor of England [made Chancellor October 24, 1529], suspected of certain heresies. During the time that he was in the custody of Master More, after divers communications, amongst other things Master More asked of him, saying, 'Constantine,

I would have thee be plain with me in one thing that I will ask; and I promise thee I will show thee favour in all other things whereof thou art accused. There is beyond the sea, Tyndale, Joye, and a great many of you: I know they cannot live without help. There are some that help and succour them with money; and thou, being one of them, hadst thy part thereof, and therefore knowest from whence it came. I pray thee, tell me, who be they that help them thus?' 'My lord,' quoth Constantine, 'I will tell you truly: it is the Bishop of London that hath holpen us, for he hath bestowed among us a great deal of money upon New Testaments to burn them; and that hath been, and yet is, our only succour and comfort.' 'Now, by my troth,' quoth More, 'I think even the same, for so much I told the Bishop before he went about it.'"[1]

All this, as has already been said, may be received as probably true in the main facts and incidents; but somewhat confused and considerably embellished in the minor details. Tunstal and More were undoubtedly in the Low Countries in August, as appears from official documents; and in May 1530, there was, as had been threatened, a public burning of New Testaments on a large scale, at Paul's Cross, under the superintendence of Tunstal, who had then, indeed, been translated to Durham, but still continued to administer the diocese of London till the return of Stokesley from the Continent. We are scarcely inclined, however, to believe that Tyndale had many New Testaments to sell in 1529. He himself had not reprinted the New Testament since the commencement of 1526; and the great majority of the six thousand copies of the octavo and quarto must, long before this period, have been sold and circulated in England, or seized and destroyed by the emissaries of the bishops. We believe, therefore, that Tunstal's purchase could not have included many of the Testaments which had been printed at Worms under Tyndale's own superintendence; and, indeed, Tyndale was hardly the man likely from the pressure of any temporary pecuniary want to dispose

[1] Hall's *Chronicle:* Foxe, Vol. IV. p. 670, etc.

of the sacred volume to a purchaser who had no object in view but to burn it.

Such Testaments as were sold to Tunstal consisted chiefly, we should suppose, of copies of the various surreptitious editions which had already appeared at Antwerp; and if these were, as George Joye says, so disfigured by the blunders of ignorant Dutch printers, that "the simple reader might ofttimes be tarried and stick," then the loss to England was all the less serious. Tyndale himself was much more likely to sell whatever superfluous copies he might still possess of his own writings. His other books would be scarcely less acceptable to Tunstal than the English New Testament; and if he really were in need of money, either for his own necessities, or to satisfy the demands of his printer, he might consider the Episcopal merchant as sent by Providence to help him in his need.

That Tyndale employed the money thus unexpectedly received in issuing a revised edition of his translation is extremely improbable: he had, indeed, promised to revise it, and the printers had repeatedly and most urgently requested him to undertake the work; but five years more were still to elapse before he found leisure for the task. It is possible, however, that he may have in some way suggested the publication of a new edition, with which the *Introduction to the Epistle to the Romans* was for the first time incorporated; for Bayfield, who was accused of bringing over Testaments from Antwerp in 1530, confessed to having introduced amongst many other books "the New Testament in English, with an introduction to the Romans."[1] There is no reason to believe that Tyndale revised this reprint; but he may have contributed something towards providing the necessary funds for producing it, or may have given some directions in order to secure, if possible, greater accuracy and completeness in the work, and

[1] Foxe, Vol. IV. p. 685. In the Record Office (4320, 4327, 4328, 4396, etc.) there are papers referring to a suspected heretic, Dewham, who "had bought in Paris the New Testament in English with an Introduction to the Epistle to the Romans."

XXVIII. Chapter.

¶ The forme of Aaron with all his apparell.

so in some measure may have justified Foxe's assertion that he "corrected the New Testament once again."

We are able, however, for the first time, to suggest a much more probable, and not less curious application of part of the money which Tunstal's short-sighted policy placed in the hands of Tyndale. At the time of Tunstal's visit to Antwerp, the translation of the Pentateuch was just completed and ready for press; and it seems not unlikely that it was in order to make arrangements for its safe transmission into England, or perhaps even to procure the necessary type for printing it, that Tyndale had journeyed from Marburg to what was then the chief centre of intercourse between England and the Continent. This new instalment of his great work, moreover, having been accomplished without any of the interruption which had driven him so precipitately from Cologne, and compelled him to change his plans, was furnished with all the appliances which Tyndale deemed necessary for the English reader. It had marginal glosses, separate prologues to all the books, and tables expounding such words as might perplex the uninstructed. There were also eleven coarsely-cut illustrations of the Tabernacle and its furniture interspersed in the Book of Exodus; and it is in these that we see a strong proof of Tyndale's journey to Antwerp in the autumn of 1529. For these illustrations are in every line and blot identically the same that had been used in 1528, in the Dutch Bible printed by Vorstermann in Antwerp. Four years later, however, when Vorstermann reprinted his Bible, the illustrations were changed; the blocks from which they were printed were evidently no longer in his possession; they had been taken to Marburg by Tyndale, and were there used in the first English version of the Pentateuch. Whatever else, therefore, Tyndale may have done with any money received from Tunstal, it seems highly probable that he purchased with it the blocks which were employed in the Book of Exodus; and the rude wood-cuts of this rare work are thus invested with a curious interest, when we look at them as virtually the contribution of that

prelate who prided himself on his zeal in condemning and burning the English Bible.

Accepting, therefore, the narrative of Hall as establishing the fact of Tyndale's visit to Antwerp in August, and assuming it as highly probable that he went there to make arrangements for the circulation in England of that translation of the Pentateuch which was so soon to be issued, and also that he purchased from Vorstermann the blocks for illustrating his work, it seems only natural to conclude that he would return without loss of time to Marburg to superintend the printing of his translation. Against this, however, some of Tyndale's biographers have protested, from the same mistaken reason which we have already repeatedly noticed, namely, a feeling of alarm lest they should detract from Tyndale's originality, by admitting the possibility of an interview between the English Reformer and Luther. For in the commencement of October 1529, Luther and the Swiss divines met at Marburg to discuss the basis of agreement, if agreement were still possible, on that perplexing question of the nature of the presence of Christ in the Sacrament, which threatened to split up the Continental Reformers into two fiercely hostile factions; and if Tyndale returned from Antwerp soon after his negotiation with Packington, it seems indisputable that he must have been at Marburg during that stormy conference which proved the death-blow to peace and unanimity among the Churches of the Reformation.

To us who, without any preconceived theory, have simply followed the indication of facts, and who have seen how largely Tyndale was influenced by Luther in his writings, and especially in his translation of the New Testament, it seems in no way improbable that he may, on this occasion, have once again, and for the last time, enjoyed the pleasure of conversing with his great German contemporary. Nor do we consider that we are detracting from Tyndale's merit or originality, if we still further suppose that he was one of the favoured fifty who were admitted into the halls of the old castle, to be present at the

gladiatorial contest in which Luther and Melanchthon measured swords with Zwingle and Oecolampadius; and the holy mysteries of the Christian faith were debated with an unhappy animosity which widened the breach between the German and Swiss Reformers.[1] There is not a tittle of positive evidence either in favour of, or against the supposition of Tyndale's presence in Marburg at the conference; yet we cannot help thinking that the moderation with which he himself discusses the doctrine of the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, and the earnest advice which he gave to Fryth, "of the presence of Christ's body in the Sacrament meddle as little as you can, that there appear no division among us," were inspired by melancholy recollections of that ill-omened contest between the angry dogmatism of Luther and the defiant sarcasm of Zwingle, which afforded too sure a presage of the impending disunion which has so seriously crippled the Reformation.

The real difficulty in fixing Tyndale's residence and occupation for the last four months of 1529, arises from a statement of Foxe, which from its unwonted circumstantiality of detail, and its apparent chronological precision, cannot be dismissed without some careful consideration of its probability. Utterly oblivious of the transactions at Antwerp in August, which he had borrowed from Hall, Foxe, in his biography of Tyndale,[2] says, "At what time he had translated the fifth book of Moses, called Deuteronomy, minding to print the same at Hamburg, he sailed thitherward; where by the way, upon the coast of Holland, he suffered shipwreck, by which he lost all his books, writings, and copies, and so was compelled to begin all again anew, to his hindrance, and doubling of his labours. Thus, having lost by that ship both money, his copies, and his time, he came in another ship to Hamburg, where, at his appointment, Master Coverdale tarried for him, and helped him in the translating of the whole five books of Moses, from Easter till December, in the house of a

[1] See D'Aubigné, Vol. IV.; Ranke, Vol. III.

[2] Vol. V. pp. 120, etc.

worshipful widow, Mistress Margaret Van Emmerson, A.D. 1529; a great sweating sickness being at the same time in the town. So, having dispatched his business at Hamburg, he returned afterwards to Antwerp again."

If this statement of Foxe is to be accepted in its integrity, it is of course absolutely incompatible not only with the supposition that Tyndale spent the autumn of 1529 in Marburg, but also with what Foxe himself had narrated of the interview with Packington in Antwerp, in August. Foxe, indeed, is not proverbial for minute accuracy, and is exceedingly liable to confusion in the chronological arrangement of his materials; yet his authority cannot be entirely disregarded, especially in the total absence of any more authentic evidence to guide us. There are, however, several circumstances in his narrative which considerably detract from its value. It is suspicious, for example, that he represents Tyndale as "minding to print" the Pentateuch at Hamburg, a place where there is not the slightest reason to believe that there was as yet a single printer; and equally suspicious that he speaks of him as assisted in his translation by "Master Coverdale," who at that time was hardly able to render Tyndale much more effective aid than that which Roye had formerly afforded as amanuensis.[1]

It has been proposed, in order to bring the conflicting narratives into harmony, that Foxe should be considered as erroneously assigning Tyndale's visit to Hamburg to 1529, instead of 1530. But, in the present instance, Foxe's narrative is confirmed by external evidence; it has been ascertained that in 1529 the sweating-sickness was raging in Hamburg, and that there was then resident in the city the widow of

[1] It is amusing to observe how modern writers give the cold shoulder to Coverdale. Mr. Lemuel Chester, in his *Life of Rogers*, ridicules the whole narrative as one of *Foxe's minor fictions;* and even the editor of *Coverdale's Remains* for the Parker Society is most careful to decline the honour accorded to him by Foxe of having assisted Tyndale in his translation. So little is known of this part of Coverdale's life that I think it rash to decide dogmatically: Foxe's narrative ought not, however, to be rejected without some documentary evidence.

a senator called Van Emmerson, who would be entitled in etiquette to the style of *Worshipful*;[1] and Foxe's narrative, thus confirmed, cannot be set aside on mere conjecture. If theory may be admitted on the question, it seems more allowable to suppose that Foxe was mistaken as to the duration of Tyndale's visit to Hamburg; he may have returned from that city to Antwerp about the end of August, in time to allow of the interview with Packington, which has been quoted from the pages of Hall; or the interview may have taken place in that intermediate return to Antwerp which seems to have followed his shipwreck.

At all events, on the 17th of January, 1530,[2] the Pentateuch was printed by Hans Luft at Marburg. This was Tyndale's second great contribution towards that sacred work to which he had devoted his life; and deserves, therefore, more than a mere passing notice, especially as the book is a rare one,[3] not often seen, and has been imperfectly described even in collected editions of Tyndale's writings. In addition to the text, the volume contains a general preface, from which we have already extracted many interesting autobiographical details. A separate preface is also prefixed to each book; lists are appended to Genesis, Exodus, and Deuteronomy, explaining the meaning of some unusual words that occur; and marginal glosses are added, generally strongly controversial in their tone.

What first strikes the reader on glancing at the volume, is the peculiarity of its typography. The Book of Genesis is printed in the customary Black letter of the period;

[1] Preface to Bagster's English *Hexapla*. The inquiries were made by Offor, which is certainly not a very satisfactory recommendation.

[2] This is the date on the colophon of Genesis: the other books were either issued contemporaneously, or immediately afterwards.

[3] Only one *perfect* copy exists in the Grenville Library in the British Museum; but there are several others nearly perfect. The copy in Sion College, I may here say, does *not* want the Book of Numbers, as Mr. Anderson and others allege. In the Bodleian, there is a perfect copy of Genesis alone; with the same colophon as in the Pentateuch, viz., "Emprented at Marlborow, in the land of Hesse, by me, Hans Luft, the yere of oure Lorde M.CCCCC.XXX., the XVII daye of Januarii."

Exodus and Leviticus are in Roman letter; Numbers is in the same Black letter as Genesis; and in Deuteronomy we have once again the Roman letter as in Exodus. At the end of Genesis is the colophon "Printed at Marlborow in the year 1530;" but there is no other note of time, place, or printer throughout the volume. The Book of Numbers evidently proceeded from the same press as Genesis; but it has been suggested, as a possible explanation of the piebald appearance of the volume, that the other three books were printed somewhere else than Marburg.[1] If future investigation shall succeed in clearing up the obscurity that hangs over Tyndale's movements in 1529 and 1530, we shall probably be able to explain perfectly this patched typography of his Pentateuch; meantime, however, as the result of a very careful examination, we feel convinced that all five books were printed by Hans Luft, at Marburg. The ornamental title-pages prefixed to the books are the same throughout, and are unquestionably Hans Luft's; what is technically called the "forme" is the same; and in the books in Roman letter we observe the same watermarks, and the same wire-lines, which are found in those in Black letter, which no one doubts to have been printed at Marburg.

Evidently the five books were intended for circulation separately as well as collectively; and some writers have supposed that Genesis and Deuteronomy were issued considerably earlier than the others, and probably some time before the close of 1529, but the evidence of this is extremely imperfect.[2] If it be objected that the date, "January 17, 1530," must

[1] At *Hamburg*, say Anderson and others; but this is out of the question.

[2] Anderson maintains this on the authority of a list (given in Foxe, Vol. IV. p. 679) of books prohibited by a royal proclamation in 1529. The proclamation itself, however, mentions only *Latin* books. The *English* books, among which are "The chapters of Moses called Genesis," and "The chapters of Moses called Deuteronomy," are taken from a list written in the *margin* of the proclamation in Tunstal's Register, and of doubtful authority. It mentions, *e.g.*, *The Practice of Prelates*, which was certainly not in England at the date to which Anderson assigns the proclamation. Anderson, indeed, acknowledges that this is a mistake; and evidently the English list is not contemporary with the Latin one.

mean, according to the modern method of reckoning, 1531, it may be replied, that the practice of reckoning the commencement of the year from January 1, was by no means unknown among the Continental printers; that some part of the Pentateuch was undoubtedly in circulation in England before the month of May, 1530, when the translation of the Old Testament was denounced; and still further, that Tyndale himself, in his *Practice of Prelates*, which was certainly written before the close of 1530, refers his readers to Exodus and Deuteronomy in such a manner as to imply that these books were already accessible in English. It may be accepted, therefore, as proven by sufficient evidence, that the Pentateuch was printed at Marburg in the beginning of 1530; and we turn from these bibliographical details to the book itself.

That Tyndale was a respectable Hebrew scholar, who had carefully studied the genius of that language, and was well able to render the books of Moses from the original, can be demonstrated by an overwhelming concurrence of evidence. The testimony of Buschius is given on p. 130; some of Tyndale's attempts at Hebrew verbal criticism we have also read; and in truth Tyndale so frequently alludes to the subject, and so freely expresses his views on the grammatical and idiomatic peculiarities of the language, that it is mere folly to doubt his competency to translate the Old Testament from the original Hebrew.[1] That in the prosecution of his work he should avail himself of all appliances within his reach, was what might have been expected from his procedure in translating the New Testament. It is no impeachment of his scholarship or his originality to suppose that he consulted Luther and the Vulgate; rather this is an indication of the pains and good sense with which he accomplished his task; and the English Bible is all the richer for the treasures thus gathered from other fields. There are indications in the Pentateuch that

[1] See for example his Preface to St. Matthew in his revised translation, *Works*, Vol. I. p. 468; also Vol. III. p. 75. [For an able, but as we venture to think not conclusive, argument against Tyndale's Hebrew scholarship, see the *Athenæum* for May 2, 1885. EDITOR.]

Tyndale worked with Luther and the Vulgate open before him; while, for those who are jealous of his independence, there is unanswerable evidence on every page, that he never for a moment surrendered his own judgment, but that the work is throughout, in the strictest sense, his own. With what ability the translation was accomplished, and how truly his version of the Old Testament is still essentially in tone and even in language the version of the English Bible, will be manifest from the following specimens, selected simply on the ground of their universal familiarity. In this case the words within brackets show the changes in the Authorised Version.

GENESIS XXII. VV. 4–13.

4 The third day (Then on the third day) Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off.

5 And said (Abraham said) unto his young men, Bide here (Abide ye here) with the ass; I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again unto you.

6 And Abraham took the wood of the sacrifice (burnt-offering), and laid it upon Isaac his son, and took fire (he took the fire) in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

7 Then spake Isaac (And Isaac spake) unto Abraham his father, and said, My father; and he answered (said), Here am I, my son. And he said, See here is fire and wood (Behold the fire and the wood), but where is the sheep (lamb) for sacrifice (a burnt-offering)?

8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide him a sheep for sacrifice (himself a lamb for a burnt-offering): So went they both (and they went both of them) together.

9 And when (omitted) they came unto the place which God shewed him (had told him of), Abraham made (built) an altar there, and dressed the wood (laid the wood in order), and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar above (omitted) upon the wood.

10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to have killed (to slay) his son.

11 Then (And) the angel of the LORD called unto him from heaven, saying (and said), Abraham, Abraham; and he answered (said), Here am I.

12 And he said, Lay not thine hands (hand) upon the child (lad), neither do any thing at all (omits *at all*) unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, in that (seeing) thou hast not kept thine only son (withheld thy son, thine only son) from me.

13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked about (omits *about*); and behold there was (behold behind him) a ram caught by the horns in a thicket (in a thicket by his horns): and he (Abraham) went and took the ram, and offered him up for a sacrifice (burnt-offering) in the stead of his son.

The following is Tyndale's version of the Decalogue:—

And God spake all these words and said: I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage.

Thou shalt have none other gods in my sight.

Thou shalt make thee no graven image, neither any similitude that is in heaven above, either in the earth beneath, or in the water that is beneath the earth: See that thou neither bow thyself unto them, neither serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sin of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and yet shew mercy unto thousands among them that love me and keep my commandments.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Remember the Sabbath-day that thou sanctify it. Six days mayest thou labour and do all that thou hast to do: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt do no manner work; neither thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, neither thy manservant nor thy maidservant, neither thy cattle, neither yet the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made both heaven and earth and the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Thou shalt not kill.

Thou shalt not break wedlock.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt bear no false witness against thy neighbour.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house: neither shalt covet thy neighbour's wife, his manservant, his maid, his ox, his ass, or aught that is his.

Balaam's prophecy (Numbers xxiv) is thus rendered:—

And he took up his parable and said: Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eye is open hath said: he hath said which heareth the words of God and seeth the visions of the Almighty, which falleth down and his eyes are opened.

How goodly are the tents of Jacob and thine habitations, Israel: even as the broad valleys and as gardens by the river-side: as the tents which the Lord hath pitched and as cypress-trees upon the water.

The water shall flow out of his bucket, and his seed shall be many waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag: and his kingdom shall be exalted.

God that brought him out of Egypt is as the strength of an unicorn unto him; and he shall eat the nations that are his enemies, and break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows.

He coucheth himself and lay down as a lion, and as a lioness who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth them, and cursed is he that curseth them. . . . .

I see him but not now. I behold him but not nigh.

There shall come a star of Jacob, and rise a sceptre of Israel which shall smite the coasts of Moab, and undermine all the children of Seth. And Edom shall be

his possession, and the possession of Seir shall be their enemy's, and Israel shall do manfully. And out of Jacob shall come he that shall destroy the remnant of the cities.

In the last passage the reader will have observed that Tyndale's version varies considerably, and certainly not for the better, from that now used in our churches. Curiously enough, however, even this inferiority affords another proof of his originality; for the translation of Luther, which he unquestionably had before him, approaches very much nearer to our Authorised Version; and it is thus evident that Tyndale did not follow it with the slavish deference of a copyist, as he is sometimes said to have done.

Hitherto this question of Tyndale's originality has unfortunately been discussed too much by theorists who have never taken the trouble to examine and compare the works of Tyndale and Luther; and extravagant assertion on the one hand has been met by equally extravagant counter-assertion on the other. But to any scholar who sits down to collate with care the versions of the English and the German translators, two facts speedily become plain and indisputable, viz., that Tyndale had Luther's work before him, and constantly consulted and occasionally adopted it; and that he never implicitly follows Luther, but translates from the original with the freedom of a man who had perfect confidence in his own scholarship. Theories, however ingenious, and however obstinately maintained, must in the end yield to the inexorable logic of facts; and it is to be hoped that that species of criticism which has so long reigned in this department of literature, and which presumes to pronounce dogmatically on the merits of works which have not only not been studied, but in some cases have not even been seen, will not much longer continue to flourish.

The marginal glosses with which the translation is accompanied are extremely pungent and controversial in their tone. Not a single passage is overlooked from which any comment could be drawn against the doctrines and practices of the Pope

and the clergy. In their force, their downright plainness, and their quaint satire, they remind a reader strongly of the writings of Luther. "The spirit and even the style of Luther," says Westcott, "is distinctly visible in them;"[1] and one naturally expects, therefore, to find that they are still more largely borrowed from the German than were the glosses in the New Testament. This, however, is not the case. Strange as it may appear, it is actually the fact that in his notes on the Pentateuch, Tyndale has taken nothing whatever from his German contemporary. Amongst upward of a hundred glosses, there is only one instance of similarity sufficiently strong to suggest that Tyndale had borrowed from Luther; and the note is in that case so very obvious and common-place, as to afford no ground for asserting that even this one solitary gloss has been translated from the German.[2]

Perhaps it would have been better if Tyndale had in this matter more closely followed his German predecessor; for the greatest of Tyndale's admirers must admit that his keen sarcasms are by no means so suitable an accompaniment to the sacred text as Luther's topographical and expository notes. It can hardly be doubted that Tyndale must have had some motive for thus entirely discarding in the Old Testament what he had so liberally availed himself of in the New; and whatever other explanation may be suggested, it seems at all events a probable supposition that he intended thereby, as it were, to protest against the popular slander that he was nothing more than an English echo of the great German heresiarch.

[1] *History of the English Bible*, p. 55.

[2] I refer to the note on Deuteronomy xviii. 15, "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee," etc., on which Tyndale remarks, as Luther had done in similar words, "Christ is here promised, a preacher of better tidings than Moses;" a remark so obvious that it is simply absurd to speak of its being borrowed. I have gone carefully over the whole Pentateuch in the English and the German, and out of about one hundred and eight glosses there are only *three*, besides the one in the text, which have the very faintest resemblance to any of the notes in Luther's Pentateuch.

Tyndale could think and speak for himself, and that as sharply and as boldly as Luther ever did, as his enemies must have felt when they read such glosses as the following:—

On Genesis xxiv. 60, "They blessed Rebekah," he remarks, "To *bless* a man's neighbour is to pray for him and to wish him good, *and not to wag two fingers over him*," a satirical allusion to episcopal benediction with two fingers outstretched.

On Genesis ix. 6, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," he writes as he had done in *The Obedience*, "This law and such like to execute, were kings and rulers ordained of God, wherefore they ought not to suffer the Pope's Cains thus to shed blood, their own not shed again, neither yet to set up their abominable sanctuaries, and neck-verses clean against the ordinance of God, but unto their damnation."

The exemption of the Egyptian priests from certain burdens (Genesis xlvii. 26) is thus criticised: "The blind guides get privileges from [*i. e.*, excusing from] bearing with their brethren, contrary to Christ's law of love. And of these priests of idols did our compassing ivy-trees learn to creep up by little and little, and to compass the great trees of the world with hypocrisy, and to thrust the roots of idolatrous superstition into them, and to suck out the juice of them with their poetry [inventions], till all be sere boughs and nothing green save their own common-wealth;" a criticism which was subsequently expanded into one of the most famous passages in his works.

On the command so oft repeated, to teach the children the meaning of the ceremonies of the Jews' religion, he remarks, "Our signs be dumb: we know not the reason of our baptism; yea, and we must say our prayers and our Belief in a tongue not understood: and yet if we answer not our prelates when they be angry, even as they would have it, we must to the fire without redemption, or forswear God."

The greed of the clergy was specially satirised: on the

Moab hath fet me fro Meſopotamia out of
the mountaynes of the eaſte ſayenge: come &
curſe me Jacob/come and defye me Iſrael.
How ſhall I curſe whom God curſeth not The pope cā
and how ſhall I defye whom the Lorde de- tell howe.
fyeth not? from the toppe of ỹ rockes I ſe him
and from the hylles I beholde him: loo/ỹ peo-
ple ſhall dwell by him ſelfe and ſhall not be
rekened amõge other nacions. Who can tell
the duſt of Jacob & the numbre of the fourth
parte of Iſrael. I praye God that my ſoule/
maye dye the deeth of the righteous / ād that
my laſt ende maye be like his.

And Balac ſayed vnto Balam/what haſt
thou done vnto me? I fett ỹ to curſe myne ene-
myes: and beholde/ thou bleſſeſt them. And
he anſwered and ſayed: muſt I not kepe that
and ſpeake it/ which the Lorde hath put in
my mouthe? And Balac ſayed vnto him: Co-
me I praye the with me vnto another place/
whence thou ſhalt ſe them/ and ſhalt ſe but ỹ
vtmoſte parte of them ād ſhalt not ſe them all
and curſe me them there.

And he brought him in to a playne felde
where men myght ſe farre/ euen to the toppe
of Piſga/ and bylt. vij. alters and offered an
oxe and a rā on euery alter. And he ſayed vn-
to Balac ſtonde here by thi ſacrifyce whyle
I goo yonder. And the Lorde mett Balam
and put wordes in his mouth and ſayed: goo
agayne vnto Balac ād thus ſaye. And when

words, "None shall appear before me empty" (Exod. xxxiv. 20), he curtly remarks, "That is a good text for the Pope;" and on the declaration that the people brought "too much," and were therefore restrained from offering (Exod. xxxvi. 6), he asks, with pointed satire, "When will the Pope say, Hoo! [hold] and forbid to offer for the building of St. Peter's Church? and when will our spirituality say, Hoo! and forbid to give them more land and to make more foundations? Never, verily, until they have all."

"How can I curse whom God hath not cursed?" asks Balaam: "The Pope can tell how," rejoins Tyndale, with grim irony in the margin. "Talk of the Lord's words when thou sittest in thine house," says Moses, in recapitulating the Law: "Talk of Robin Hood, say our prelates," is the cutting gloss which Tyndale has appended.

In such comments as these, terribly plain and almost fierce in their hostility to the Pope and the clergy, we have the natural expression of that profound emotion which all that he had suffered, and all that he had witnessed, produced in the mind of Tyndale. Decorous ecclesiastical historians, like Collier, would have been shocked by the "irreverent language" which Tyndale applies to clerical dignitaries and time-honoured ceremonies; those who have followed him during long dreary years of exile and persecution can understand the bitterness of heart which thus found vent in sharp and angry words, and can sympathise with him, even if they believe that his version of the five books of Moses would have been improved by the omission of this admixture of human resentment.

Of the various prefaces to the books we need not speak at length. The most noteworthy feature in them is the admirable good sense with which he insists upon the necessity of adhering to the literal meaning of Scripture, and eschewing all manner of allegorical interpretations. This was the characteristic of his prefaces which would make the deepest impression upon his contemporaries; for all true interpretations

of Scripture had been lost, and the expositor perplexed his readers with whimsical allegorical conundrums. No greater service, therefore, could be rendered to sound theology than by thus recalling men to the only true system of exposition; and independently, therefore, of his pre-eminent merits as a translator, Tyndale is entitled to be reverenced by all Englishmen, as the founder of all rational Scriptural interpretation in England. In the following extract from the Preface to Leviticus we have the enunciation of a revolution in theology, quite as important and as fundamental as the greatest of the changes effected at the Reformation:—[1]

"Because that few know the use of the Old Testament, and the most part think it nothing necessary but to make allegories, which they feign every man after his own brain at all wild adventure, without any certain rule; therefore, though I have spoken of them in another place [in *The Obedience*], yet, lest the book come not to all men's hands that shall read this, I will speak of them here also a word or twain.

"We had need to take heed everywhere that we be not beguiled with false allegories, whether they be drawn out of the New Testament or the Old, either out of any other story, or of the creatures of the world, but namely [especially] in this book [the Pentateuch]. Here a man had need to put on all his spectacles, and to arm himself against invisible spirits.

"First, allegories prove nothing; and by allegories understand examples or similitudes borrowed of strange matters, and of another thing than that thou entreatest of. As, though circumcision be a figure of baptism, yet thou canst not prove baptism by circumcision. For this argument were very feeble, The Israelites were circumcised, therefore we must be baptised. And in like manner, though the offering of Isaac were a figure or ensample of the resurrection, yet is this argument naught, Abraham would have offered Isaac, but God delivered him from death; therefore we shall rise again: and so forth in all other.

"But the very use of allegories is to declare [illustrate] and open a text, that it may be the better perceived and understood. As, when I have a clear text of Christ and the apostles, that I must be baptised, then I may borrow an example of circumcision to express the nature, power, and fruit, or effect of baptism. For as circumcision was unto them a common badge, signifying that they were all soldiers of God, to war His war, and separating them from all other nations disobedient unto God; even so

[1] The whole Preface is well worth reading: I do not know any better exposition of the true meaning and purpose of the ceremonies of the Jewish economy.

baptism is our common badge, and sure earnest, and perpetual memorial, that we pertain unto Christ, and are separated from all that are not Christ's. And as circumcision was a token certifying them that they were received unto the favour of God, and their sins forgiven them; even so baptism certifieth us that we are washed in the blood of Christ, and received to favour for His sake: and as circumcision signified unto them the cutting away of their own lusts, and slaying of their free-will, as they call it, to follow the will of God; even so baptism signifieth unto us repentance, and the mortifying of our unruly members and body of sin, to walk in a new life, and so forth.

"And likewise, though that the saving of Noe, and of them that were with him in the ship, through water, is a figure, that is to say, an example and likeness of baptism, as Peter maketh it (1 Pet. iii.), yet I cannot prove baptism therewith, save describe it only. For as the ship saved them in the water through faith, in that they believed God, and as the other that would not believe Noe perished; even so baptism saveth us through the word of faith which it preacheth, when all the world of the unbelieving perish. And Paul (1 Cor. x.) maketh the sea and the cloud a figure of baptism; by which, and a thousand more, I might declare it, but not prove it. Paul also in the said place maketh the rock, out of which Moses brought water unto the children of Israel, a figure or ensample of Christ; not to prove Christ (for that were impossible), but to describe Christ only; even as Christ Himself (John iii.) borroweth a similitude or figure of the brasen serpent, to lead Nicodemus from his earthly imagination into the spiritual understanding of Christ, saying: 'As Moses lifted up a serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that none that believe in Him perish, but have everlasting life.' By which similitude the virtue of Christ's death is better described than thou couldst declare it with a thousand words. For as those murmurers against God, as soon as they repented, were healed of their deadly wounds, through looking on the brasen serpent only, without medicine or any other help, yea, and without any other reason but that God hath said it should be so; and not to murmur again, but to leave their murmuring: even so all that repent, and believe in Christ, are saved from everlasting death, of pure grace, without, and before, their good works; and not to sin again, but to fight against sin, and henceforth to sin no more.

"Even so with the ceremonies of this book thou canst prove nothing, save describe and declare only the putting away of our sins through the death of Christ. For Christ is Aaron, and Aaron's sons, and all that offer the sacrifice to purge sin. And Christ is all manner offering that is offered: He is the ox, the sheep, the goat, the kid, and the lamb; He is the ox that is burnt without the host, and the scape-goat that carried all the sin of the people away into the wilderness: for as they purged the people from their worldly uncleannesses through blood of the sacrifices, even so doth Christ purge us from the uncleannesses of everlasting death with His own blood; and as their worldly sins could no otherwise be

purged, than by blood of sacrifices, even so can our sins be no otherwise forgiven than through the blood of Christ. All the deeds in the world, save the blood of Christ, can purchase no forgiveness of sins; for our deeds do but help our neighbour, and mortify the flesh, and help that we sin no more: but and if we have sinned, it must be freely forgiven through the blood of Christ, or remain for ever.

"And in like manner of the lepers thou canst prove nothing: thou canst never conjure out confession thence, howbeit thou hast an handsome example there to open the binding and loosing of our priests with the key of God's Word; for as they made no man a leper, even so ours have no power to command any man to be in sin, or to go to purgatory or hell. And therefore, (inasmuch as binding and loosing is one power), as those priests healed no man; even so ours cannot of their invisible and dumb power drive any man's sins away, or deliver him from hell or feigned purgatory. Howbeit if they preached God's Word purely, which is the authority that Christ gave them, then they should bind and loose, kill and make alive again, make unclean and clean again, and send to hell and fetch thence again; so mighty is God's Word. For if they preached the law of God, they should bind the consciences of sinners with the bonds of the pains of hell, and bring them unto repentance: and then if they preached unto them the mercy that is in Christ, they should loose them and quiet their raging consciences, and certify them of the favour of God, and that their sins be forgiven.

"Finally, beware of allegories; for there is not a more handsome or apt thing to beguile withal than an allegory; nor a more subtle and pestilent thing in the world to persuade a false matter, than an allegory. And contrariwise; there is not a better, vehementer, or mightier thing to make a man understand withal, than an allegory. For allegories make a man quick-witted, and print [imprint] wisdom in him, and make it to abide, where bare words go but in at the one ear, and out at the other. As this, with such like sayings: 'Put salt to all your sacrifices,' instead of this sentence, 'Do all your deeds with discretion,' greeteth and biteth (if it be understood) more than plain words. And when I say, instead of these words, 'Boast not yourself of your good deeds,' 'Eat not the blood nor the fat of your sacrifice;' there is as great difference between them as there is distance between heaven and earth. For the life and beauty of all good deeds is of God, and we are but the carrion-lean; we are only the instrument whereby God worketh only, but the power is His: as God created Paul anew, poured His wisdom into him, gave him might, and promised him that His grace should never fail him, etc., and all without deservings, except that murdering the saints, and making them curse and rail on Christ, be meritorious. Now, as it is death to eat the blood or fat of any sacrifice, is it not (think ye), damnable to rob God of His honour, and to glorify myself with His honour?"

Those best acquainted with the theology of the English

Reformation will be the first to admit that we shall look in vain in Cranmer, Latimer, or Ridley for any such clearness of apprehension and precision of language as are here displayed by Tyndale. Sometimes, indeed, his language is not only precise but exquisitely beautiful, and worthy of that master of English eloquence to whom we owe our New Testament. Would not the reader, for example, be inclined to believe that the following sentence from Tyndale's Preface to Exodus was one of the gems of Jeremy Taylor? "The ceremonies were not permitted only, but also commanded of God; *to lead the people in the shadows of Moses and night of the Old Testament; until the light of Christ and day of the New Testament were come.*"

The New Testament had been issued with an Epistle desiring the "learned to amend if aught were found amiss:" but those who had condemned the work as full of errors had taken no steps to provide the only proper remedy—a translation free from errors. The prelates, "those stubborn Nimrods which so mightily fight against God," instead of amending whatever needed correction, had, as Tyndale indignantly protests, stirred up the civil authorities "to torment such as tell the truth, and to burn the Word of their souls' health, and slay whosoever believe thereon." In spite of their fierce declamations, however, he declined to be provoked into any dogmatic assertion of his own immunity from error in that work to which he had devoted his own best industry and learning. He had done his best; but if he had erred through lack of knowledge he was willing to be guided by those whose scholarship was greater than his own. He was willing that himself, and even his work, should perish, if by any other means the cause of God could be more successfully promoted. "I submit this book," such is the conclusion of his General Preface, "and all other that I have either made or translated, or shall in time to come, if it be God's will that I shall further labour in His harvest, unto all them that submit themselves unto the Word of God, to be corrected of them;

yea, and moreover to be disallowed and also burnt, if it seem worthy, when they have examined it with the Hebrew, so [provided] that they first put forth of their own translating another that is more correct."

It was not the will of God that Tyndale should labour much longer in His harvest; he still continued, indeed, to prosecute his translation of the Old Testament, but the publication of the Pentateuch may be considered as his last formal contribution on any large scale to the English Bible: and these noble words of his Preface will, perhaps, serve to explain to the thoughtful reader what still seems mysterious and incredible to some minds, the continued prevalence, namely, in our Authorised Version of the spirit and the language of the first translator, in spite of the vast advance in verbal knowledge since his days. No translation, the work of a mere verbal scholar, has ever attained a permanent existence in literature; if words are to live, they must come living from the heart of him that writes them; and it is because the words of Scripture had been so incorporated with the spiritual life of Tyndale as to have become in a manner the very utterances of his own soul, that they have maintained their hold over the hearts of his countrymen, when the labours of later scholars more learned in the minutiæ of grammatical lore have been consigned to oblivion.

We have assumed that at the close of 1529 Tyndale had returned to Marburg to superintend the printing of his translation of the Pentateuch, that being a work of too much importance to be left to the care of printers ignorant of the English language.[1] Possibly he may have remained at Marburg during the whole of 1530, for he was still safe there from any personal danger; or not impossibly he may have paid that long visit to Hamburg, lasting from Easter to December, which Foxe has assigned, erroneously as some

[1] The peculiar typography of the volume has already been noticed: in other respects it is well printed, except that there is extreme irregularity in the numbering of the pages.

think, to the previous year. In either city he would be exposed to the attacks of that mysterious disease which was looked upon as the peculiar scourge of the English nation, but which was then for the first time desolating the cities of Germany.[1] In Marburg, Francis Lambert, the chief glory of the infant University, fell a victim to the plague, and his death must have deprived Tyndale of a friend whose piety, zeal, and manifold experience may often have served to stimulate and comfort him in his work; and whose bold views on all questions of ecclesiastical order may have had more influence than has generally been imagined, on the opinions of our translator.

The death of Lambert would leave a very considerable blank in Marburg, which had not, in truth, much beyond its comparative security to attract Tyndale; for with all its zeal for orthodoxy the town was by no means distinguished for the purity of its morals; already there were signs of that laxness which subsequently grew into open and scandalous immorality. Lambert, it is said, was broken-hearted with what he saw around him, and was contemplating removal from the place when death put an end to his grief; and probably Tyndale, vexed with what was so uncongenial to his mind, was not sorry to take up his abode elsewhere.

But wherever Tyndale's abode may have been during this year, we can with perfect certainty determine his occupation. Two great works must have fully engaged all his energies. In the summer of 1529, just before starting on his embassy to Cambrai, Sir Thomas More had published an elaborate condemnation of Tyndale's translation of the New Testament, and a refutation of the opinions advanced in *The Wicked Mammon* and *The Obedience;* and from the reputation of his antagonist and the ability of his work, it was absolutely indispensable that Tyndale should prepare to defend himself,

[1] Cochloeus, in the work which has been already quoted, expressly states that this was the first outbreak in Germany of that "*pestis quædam quæ sudor Anglicanus dicebatur;*" *Commentarii de actis et scriptis M. Lutheri*, p. 203.

and not seem to retire vanquished from the conflict. This controversy, a most interesting episode in Tyndale's career, we reserve for separate treatment in the next chapter, and we only allude to it now as explaining Tyndale's occupation during the year 1530.

The other great work is the bitterest of all Tyndale's controversial writings, his famous *Practice of Prelates*. Since Tyndale had left his native country great changes had taken place; for it was an age of change and revolution, and events moved on with startling rapidity. The royal project for a divorce, originating, perhaps, in scruples of conscience on Henry's part, had been instigated and encouraged by Wolsey until it had grown beyond all control, and threatened a rebellion against the supremacy of Rome. Wolsey's "angel wit" had at length failed him amidst the perplexities which surrounded him on all hands; he had forfeited the confidence of his sovereign, and had fallen from the meridian of his glory. Parliament had assembled, after a long interval of almost irresponsible government by the great Cardinal; a layman, Sir Thomas More, occupied that highest place of office which had come to be looked upon as the sacred prerogative of an ecclesiastic, and the House of Commons had dared to rise against the power of the Church, and had curtailed the exactions of the clergy. The two Universities had been compelled, by somewhat rough means, it is true,[1] to pronounce a decision on the question of the royal divorce, which was tantamount to an infringement of the authority of the Pope. Wolsey was in retirement in his northern diocese; and the heart of the nation was stirring with the first impulses of that mighty movement which issued in spiritual freedom. Few even of those who shared most prominently in the movement had any true conception of the nature or tendency of the work in which they were engaged; and Tyndale, looking on from a distance, imperfectly supplied with information, hearing only one side of the question from men who were

[1] See Demaus' *Latimer*, p. 75, etc.

themselves badly informed, and who were in general agents of a very humble class, was certainly by no means in a position to form any accurate judgment of the character or probable result of the mighty revolution which was in progress in England, or of the motives of the chief agents on either side.

This much it seemed desirable to premise by way of apology for Tyndale; for, although his sagacity has been by some biographers lauded with the most extravagant panegyrics, the truth is that his view of the political situation in England is utterly baseless, and such as he would never have published had he been resident in his native land. He actually believed that the fall of Wolsey and the reformation of abuses in Parliament were mere tricks on the part of the Cardinal to tide over the difficulties of a "jeopardous year;" that his disgrace was "nothing save a cast of his old practice," "to bring the world into a fool's paradise" with what was merely "faces of reformations;" and that all things would return to their former course as soon as that "constellation was overrun whereof the prelates were afraid." It is unnecessary to prove that this was an entire misapprehension of the nature of the crisis; Tyndale in venturing into the region of politics had travelled somewhat out of his own sphere, and his opinions on subjects which he so imperfectly understood must be received with a certain amount of qualification and reserve.

The general value and importance of *The Practice of Prelates* are, however, altogether independent of Tyndale's peculiar opinions as to the situation of affairs in England, and the character and motives of the chief movers there. The book is a sort of historical summary of the *practices* by which the Pope and the clergy gradually grew up from primeval poverty and humility into that universal supremacy which in Tyndale's time they enjoyed; and the story is related with a boldness and bitterness which were not likely to conciliate the favour of the rulers of the Church. In

treating of this theme, Tyndale was perfectly at home; it had been the subject of his thoughts and of his observation for ten years; his exile and his persecution had deepened and embittered his convictions; in *The Practice of Prelates*, he gives full vent to the accumulated indignation of half a lifetime, and his words fall upon the reader with the terrible emphasis of the denunciations of the Hebrew prophets. There is probably nowhere in the English language any passage superior in force and graphic skill to the well-known description of the rise of the Pope, in which Tyndale has expanded one of the marginal glosses on his Pentateuch into an elaborate parable. The passage is probably not unknown to some readers, but it is too characteristic a specimen of the style of *The Practice of Prelates* to be omitted from a Life of Tyndale.

"A proper similitude to describe our holy Father.

"And to see how our holy father came up, mark the ensample of an ivy tree. First it springeth out of the earth, and then awhile creepeth along by the ground till it find a great tree. Then it joineth itself beneath alow [below] unto the body of the tree, and creepeth up a little and a little, fair and softly. And at the beginning, while it is yet thin and small, [so] that the burden is not perceived, it seemeth glorious to garnish the tree in the winter, and to bear off the tempests of the weather. But in the mean season it thrusteth roots into the bark of the tree, to hold fast withal: and ceaseth not to climb up, till it be at the top and above all. And then it sendeth his branches along by the branches of the tree, and overgroweth all, and waxeth great, heavy, and thick; and sucketh the moisture so sore out of the tree and his branches, that it choaketh and stifleth them. And then the foul stinking ivy waxeth mighty in the stump of the tree, and becometh a seat and a nest for all unclean birds, and for blind owls, which hawk in the dark, and dare not come at the light.

"Even so the Bishop of Rome, now called pope, at the beginning crope along upon the earth; and every man trod upon him in this world. But as soon as there came a Christian emperor, he joined himself unto his feet and kissed them, and crope up a little with begging now this privilege, now that; now this city, now that; to find poor people withal, and the necessary ministers of God's Word. And he entitled[1] the emperor with choosing the pope and other bishops; and promoted in the spiritualty,

[1] *i.e.*, bestowed upon him the title or claim to choose the popes and other bishops; which, says Tyndale, in his marginal note, "pertained unto the emperor and kings once."

not whom virtue and learning, but whom the favour of great men commended; to flatter, to get friends, and defenders withal. And the alms of the congregation which was the food and patrimony of the poor and necessary preachers, that he called St. Peter's patrimony, St. Peter's rent, St. Peter's lands, St. Peter's right; to cast a vain fear and a heathenish superstitiousness into the hearts of men, that no man should dare meddle with whatsoever came once into their hands for fear of St. Peter, though they ministered it never so evil; and that they which should think it none alms to give them any more, because they had too much already, should yet give St. Peter somewhat, as Nabuchodonesser gave his god Beel [Bel], to purchase an advocate and an intercessor of St. Peter, and that St. Peter should at the first knock let them in. And thus, with flattering and feigning, and vain superstition, under the name of St. Peter, he crept up and fastened his roots in the heart of the emperor, and with his sword clamb up above all his fellow-bishops, and brought them under his feet. And as he subdued them with the emperor's sword, even so by subtilty and help of them (after that they were sworn faithful) he clamb above the emperor, and subdued him also, and made him stoop unto his feet and kiss them another while. Yea, Pope Cœlestinus crowned the Emperor Henry the Fifth [Sixth], holding the crown between his feet: and when he had put the crown on, he smote it off with his feet again, saying, that he had might to make emperors and to put them down again.

"And as the pope played with the emperor, so did his branches and his members, the bishops, play in every kingdom, dukedom, and lordship; insomuch that the very heirs of them by whom they came up, hold now their lands of them, and take them for their chief lords. And as the emperor is sworn to the pope, even so every king is sworn to the bishops and prelates of his realm: and they are the chiefest in all parliaments; yea, they and their money, and they that be sworn to them, and come up by them, rule altogether.

"And thus the pope, the father of all hypocrites, hath with falsehood and guile perverted the order of the world, and turned the roots of the trees upward, and hath put down the kingdom of Christ, and set up the kingdom of the devil, whose vicar he is; and hath put down the ministers of Christ, and hath set up the ministers of Satan, disguised yet in names and garments like unto the angels of light and ministers of righteousness. For Christ's kingdom is not of the world (John xviii.); and the pope's kingdom is all the world.

"And Christ is neither judge nor divider in this world (Luke xii.): but the pope judgeth and divideth all the world, and taketh the empire and all kingdoms, and giveth them to whom he lusteth.

"Christ saith, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit:' so that the first step in the kingdom of Christ is humbleness, or humility; that thou canst find in thine heart to do service unto all men, and to suffer that all men tread thee.

"The pope saith, 'Blessed be the proud and high-minded, that

can climb and subdue all under them, and maintain their right, and such as will suffer of no man:' so that he which was yesterday taken from the dunghill and promoted this day by his prince, shall to-morrow, for the pope's pleasure, curse him, and excommunicate him, and interdict his realm.

"Christ saith, 'Blessed be the meek,' or soft, that be harmless as doves.

"The pope blesseth them that can set all the world together by the ears, and fight, and slay manfully for his sake, that he may come hot from blood-shedding to a bishoprick: as our cardinal did, and as St. Thomas of Canterbury did, which was made bishop in the field, in complete harness on his horseback, and his spear bloody in his hand.[1]

"Christ hath neither holes for foxes, nor nests for birds, nor yet whereon to lay His head, nor promised aught in this world unto His disciples, nor took any to His disciple but him that had forsaken all.

"The ivy-tree, the pope, hath under his roots throughout all Christendom, in every village, holes for foxes, and nests for unclean birds in all his branches, and promiseth unto his disciples all the promotions of the world.

"The nearer unto Christ a man cometh, the lower he must descend, and the poorer he must wax. But the nearer unto the pope ye come, the higher ye must climb, and the more riches ye must gather, whencesoever ye can get them, to pay for your bulls, and to purchase a glorious name, and license to wear a mitre, and a cross, and a pall, and goodly ornaments."

With the same clearness and boldness, and with a very considerable amount of historical learning, Tyndale traces the various *practices* by which this usurped supremacy was maintained and defended; the perversion of Scripture, the universal corruption of morals, the degradation of all religion into form, the commutation of all duty into the payment of money to the clergy. Tyndale was a sharp critic; but the disease required a merciless knife. That which should have been the noblest principle in human nature had become the most corrupt; the depth of a man's devotion was gauged by the amount of his offering before the shrine of a favourite saint; and amidst all the routine of worship, one plain fact alone, it has been truly said, was conspicuous to the under-

[1] It is not historically correct to say that Becket was made bishop in the field; but the language of his chaplain and biographer, William Fitz-Stephen, might seem to Tyndale to imply that he was so.

The pyac-
tyſe of Prelates.
¶ Whether the Kinges grace
maye be ſeparated from hys
quene/because ſhe was
his brothers wyfe.
marborch
In the yere of oure Lorde.
M.CCCCC.&.XXX.

standing of the people at large, "that all evils which could touch either their spirits or their bodies might be escaped by means which resolved themselves, scarcely disguised, into the payment of moneys."[1]

Against a system so degrading, Tyndale's soul rose in abhorrence; and he uses accordingly language of unmeasured vituperation. Advocates of moderation in controversy, men who insist that religious revolutions should be carried on in a decorous constitutional manner, will find small pleasure in perusing *The Practice of Prelates*. Tyndale hated the system with his whole heart, and he condemns it with his whole strength. In his eyes the pope was Antichrist and the whore of Babylon; the clergy were his myrmidons employed to spy and rob the laity; the monks and friars were caterpillars, horse-leeches, drone-bees, draff. All this and more may be read in *The Practice of Prelates;* for Tyndale's indignation, sharpened by years of exile and homesick longing, knew no bounds, and his words knew no moderation. Yet with all this violence of language, it must be noted that Tyndale protested against using any physical violence; and carefully warned his readers "not to resist the hypocrites with violence, which vengeance pertaineth unto God." Let this fact be fairly borne in mind by those who condemn his violent language. His language, we have not concealed, is fierce and bitter, perhaps unduly fierce and bitter; but bitter words were not so hard to bear as exile, not so cruel as imprisonment, not so terrible as the fires of martyrdom.

The general summary of *The Practice of Prelates* was concluded by a special exposition of the misgovernment of England by Wolsey [*Wolfsee*, Tyndale calls him, after the punning system of the time], and here Tyndale's indignation culminates in a fierce attack upon the Cardinal. His description of Wolsey is in truth a terrible pendant to the softened portrait given by the "gentle Griffiths."[2]

[1] Froude's *History of England*, Vol. II.

[2] Shakespere, *Henry VIII.*

"When the King's Grace came first to the right of the crown, and unto the goverance of the realm, young and unexpert, Thomas Wolfsee, a man of lust and courage and bodily strength, to do and to suffer great things, and to endure in all manner of voluptuousness; expert and exercised in the course of the world, as he which had heard, read, and seen much policy, and had done many things himself, and had been of the secret counsel of weighty matters; as subtle as Sinon that betrayed Troy; utterly appointed to semble and dissemble,[1] to have one thing in the heart and another in the mouth; being thereto as eloquent as subtle, and able to persuade what he lusted to them that were unexpert; so desirous and greedy of honour, that he cared not but for the next [nearest] and most compendious way thereto, whether godly or ungodly; this wily *wolf*, I say and raging *sea*, and shipwreck of all England (though he showed himself pleasant and calm at the first), came unto the King's Grace, and waited upon him, and was no man so obsequious and serviceable, and in all games and sports the first and next at hand, and as a captain to courage other, and a gay finder out of new pastimes, to obtain favour withal.

"And ever as he grew in promotions and dignity, so gathered he unto him of the most subtle-witted, and of them that were drunk in the desire of honour, most like unto himself: and after they were sworn, he promoted them, and with great promises made them in falsehood faithful, and of them ever presented unto the King's Grace, and put them into his service, saying, 'This is a man meet for your Grace.' And by these spies, if aught were done or spoken in the court against the cardinal, of that he had word within an hour or two; and then came the cardinal to court with all his magic, to persuade the contrary. If any in the court had spoken against the cardinal, and the same not great in the king's favour, the cardinal bade him walk a villain, and thrust him out of the court headlong. If he were in conceit with the King's Grace, then he flattered, and persuaded, and corrupted some with gifts, and sent some ambassadors, and some he made captains at Calais, Hames, Guines, Jersey, and Guernsey, or sent them to Ireland, and into the north; and so occupied them, till the King had forgot them, and other were in their rooms, or till he had sped what he intended.

"And, after the same example, he furnished the court with chaplains of his own sworn disciples, and children of his own bringing-up, to be alway present, and to dispute of vanities, and to water whatsoever the cardinal had planted. If among those cormorants any yet began to be too much in favour with the King, and to be somewhat busy in the court, and to draw any other way than as my lord cardinal had appointed that the plough should go, anon he was sent to Italy or to Spain; or some quarrel was picked against him, and so was thrust out of the court, as Stokesley was.

[1] To *semble* is to pretend to be what a man is not; to *dissemble*, is to pretend not to be what a man really is.

"He promoted the Bishop of Lincoln that now is [Longland], his most faithful friend and old companion, and made him confessor: to whom of whatsoever the King's Grace shrove himself, think ye not that he spake so loud that the cardinal heard it? And not unright; for as God's creatures ought to obey God and serve His honour, so ought the pope's creatures to obey the pope and serve his majesty.

"Finally, Thomas Wolfsee became what he would, even porter of heaven, so that no man could enter into promotion but through him."

The whole of Wolsey's administration is criticised with the same unsparing severity; the wars with France and Scotland; the treachery, at one time, against Francis, at another against Charles; the lavish expenditure of money; the capricious changes of public policy; all had been directed by the Cardinal, all were intended to gratify his pleasure and to promote the interests of the pope; and to obtain these ends the well-being of the nation had been sacrificed.

Of the truth and justice of this political survey, on the part of Tyndale, we need not again speak; much of it is admirably true and just; some of it was unfounded—the result of defective information, and of want of communication with the promoters of the Reformation movement in England. The most conspicuous instance of this is to be seen in Tyndale's singular opinions on the subject of the royal divorce. In England, those who were in favour of the Reformation were, almost to a man, advocates of the divorce, as a first step towards the curtailment of the monstrous assumptions of the Papal See. To Tyndale, however, the whole proceeding bore quite a different aspect: it was in his eyes simply one of the "old practices of the prelates," a trick which they had devised in order to promote their own ends, and to advance the interests of the Church. Nothing could, indeed, more effectually demonstrate Tyndale's perfect honesty and independence, than the maintenance of such an opinion; we do not need his own assurance to induce us to believe that, in thus writing, he "was discharging his conscience," and performing a duty which every person "baptised in the heart with repentance of evil, and with faith of forgiveness in the blood of Christ," should

with due deliberation undertake. At the same time it would be superfluous to prove that in this view Tyndale was considerably mistaken; and probably the position which he thus assumed may have detracted from the influence of his work. For his theory on the subject of the divorce could not but be unacceptable to the English Reformers; whilst his opinions on the "practices of prelates" would certainly not commend him to the approbation of his old enemies. His opinions thus tended in some respects to alienate both the great parties in England; and some years later, when it was obvious to all that the prosecution of Henry's divorce had most materially contributed to the overthrow of the Papal Supremacy, and when the daughter of Anne Boleyn wielded the sceptre of a Protestant nation, it was deemed necessary, in republishing *The Practice of Prelates*, to omit nearly everything that Tyndale had written on the great question of the royal marriage.

The work concluded with words of noble, earnest appeal to all classes of Englishmen, from the King to the lowest of his subjects, urging them to repent and to follow that plain rule of life which God had laid down in Holy Scripture.

"I beseech his Grace," says he, in words almost identical with those which Latimer was at that moment penning in England,[1] "to have mercy of his own soul, and not to suffer Christ and His Holy Testament to be persecuted under his name any longer, that the sword of the wrath of God may be put up again, which, for that cause no doubt, is most chiefly drawn.

"And as for them which for lucre, as Judas, betray the truth, and write against their consciences;[2] and which, for honour, as Balaam, enforce to curse the people of God; I would fain, if their hearts were not too hard, that they did

[1] Demaus' *Latimer*, pp. 99, etc.

[2] This is directed against Sir Thomas More, and is certainly written on imperfect information. Sir Thomas has much to answer for in his treatment of the English Reformers both in word and deed, but he was quite incapable of writing "for lucre against his conscience."

repent. And as fain I would that our prelates did repent, if it were possible for them to prefer God's honour before their own.

"And unto all subjects I say that they repent. For the cause of evil rulers is the sin of the subjects, [as] testifieth the Scripture. And the cause of false preachers is, that the people have no love unto the truth, [as] saith Paul, in the second chapter of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians.

"And, finally, if the persecution of the King's Grace, and of other temporal persons conspiring with the spiritualty, be of ignorance, I doubt not but that their eyes shall be opened shortly, and they shall see and repent, and God shall show them mercy. But and if it be of a set malice against the truth, and of a grounded hate against the law of God by the reason of a full consent they have to sin, and to walk in their old ways of ignorance, whereunto 'being now past all repentance,' they have utterly yielded themselves, to follow with full lust, without bridle or snaffle, which is the sin against the Holy Ghost; then ye shall see, even shortly, that God shall turn the point of the sword, wherewith they now shed Christ's blood, homeward to shed their own again, after all the examples of the Bible.

"And let them remember that I, well toward three years agone,[1] to prevent all occasions and all carnal beasts that seek fleshly liberty, sent forth *The true Obedience of a Christian Man*, which yet they condemned, but after they had condemned the New Testament, as right was, whence

[1] These words of course afford a valuable clue to the chronological arrangement of Tyndale's works; and had the colophon stated, as is usual in Hans Luft's books, the day of publication, we might have assigned all his early writings to a definite date. Unfortunately, however, in this case we have nothing more precise than the year 1530, and can only conjecture the period of the year to which the book may have belonged. It certainly was not issued earlier than May, or it would have been condemned in the Council which then met in London; and it was as certainly written before Wolsey's final arrest was known on the Continent. Anderson thinks it contains allusions to what was passing in England in August and September; and it seems to me extremely probable that it was written in those months, but not printed till the very end of the year.

The Obedience had his authority. Now then, if when the light is come abroad, in which their wickedness cannot be hid, they find no such obedience in the people unto their old tyranny, whose fault is it? This is a sure conclusion: none obedience, that is not of love, can long endure; and in your deeds can no man see any cause of love: and the knowledge of Christ, for whose sake only a man would love you, though ye were never so evil, ye persecute. Now then, if any disobedience rise, are ye not the cause of it yourselves?

"Say not but that ye be warned!"

With these words of solemn and prophetic warning, to which the almost contemporary death of Wolsey would give terrible emphasis, Tyndale's voice, as the public prophet of his country, was silenced; henceforward he devoted himself more exclusively to those labours as a translator and interpreter of Scripture to which he had at first consecrated his life, and which, after all that has been justly said in praise of his other writings, constitute his true claim upon the gratitude of his countrymen.

It was not to be expected that a work so bitter and so able should escape the condemnation with which Tyndale's previous works had been visited. It figures in all the lists of prohibited books; and Sir Thomas More does not omit to censure it in his *Confutation*, though with less severity than usual, perhaps, because his criticism had considerable foundation in fact. "Then we have," says he, "*The Practice of Prelates*, wherein Tyndale had weened to have made a special show of his high worldly wit, and that men should have seen therein that there was nothing done among princes, but that he was fully advertised of all the secrets, and that so far forth, that he knew the privy practice made between the King's Highness and the late Lord Cardinal, and the reverend Father Cuthbert, then Bishop of London and me, that it was devised wilily that the Cardinal should leave the Chancellorship to me, and the Bishopric of Durham to my

said Lord of London for a while, till he list himself to take them both again."[1]

Tyndale was, as we have admitted, probably misinformed as to the private policy of the King and the Cardinal, but, as Sir Thomas speedily discovered, he was not an enemy to be demolished by a sneer.

[1] Preface to More's *Confutation.*

CHAPTER IX.

CONTROVERSY WITH SIR THOMAS MORE.

THE literary duel between Tyndale and Sir Thomas More, a most important occurrence in the life of both these illustrious men, has been reserved for description in a distinct chapter, so as not to interfere with the continuity of the preceding and succeeding narrative. The combat may be said to have been maintained with more or less vigour for some five or six years, and forms by far too prominent an episode in Tyndale's biography to be lightly passed over.

One of the earliest precautions adopted by the English authorities in order to isolate England from contamination by the Lutheran opinions which were spreading on the Continent, was to prohibit, under severe penalties, any one to import, sell, read, or possess heretical books. As early as 1521 Wolsey had peremptorily commanded all who possessed Lutheran works to give them up; but the ingenuity of adventurous merchants, and the zeal of devoted colporteurs, contrived without much difficulty to elude the vigilance of the authorities. The works of the Continental Reformers were imported into England in great numbers, and were widely circulated in London, in the Universities, and in those districts where the people had imbibed the opinions of the Wickliffites. Occasional discoveries of these books were made by the authorities; stray volumes were seized and publicly burned; but the bishops were quite unaware of the enormous dimensions which the circulation of those prohibited books had reached. The disclosures of the winter of 1527 and the spring of 1528 at length revealed to them something of the extent to which, in spite of

their prohibitions, the forbidden works had been introduced into England. Upwards of three hundred and fifty such books had been introduced into Oxford in a single visit by a single agent; and they were, with very little reserve, offered for sale in the streets of London in hundreds.

In these circumstances, when it was at last ascertained that Tyndale's New Testament, and the works of Luther, Lambert, Wickliffe, Zwingle, and other Reformers had been for years extensively read, it became evident to the bishops that it was necessary, if possible, to provide some antidote to what they considered the fatal poison, of which so many had already partaken. By greater diligence in the future, or by the strange device of purchasing all dangerous books, they hoped to be able to arrest the progress of heresy in time to come; but some other expedient must be adopted to undo the mischief that had already been done. Tunstal was prepared with a remedy. He resolved to use in defence of the Church the same weapon that had been so successfully employed against her. The press had circulated the poison, he determined that the antidote should likewise be circulated by the press.

For this task of defending the Church with his pen against all assaults, one man, Sir Thomas More, was pre-eminently qualified, both by his incomparable genius and by his devoted adherence to the Church. It could not be objected to him that he was an ignorant bigot, and a foe to all polite learning, for he was one of the most distinguished scholars in Europe; it could not even be alleged that he was unable to enter into the feelings of the Reformers, and that his eyes were blinded by unreasoning prejudice, for he had been the bosom friend of Erasmus and Colet, and must therefore have been able to sympathise to some extent with the opinions which these great men had been amongst the first to propagate. Possessed of very considerable learning and inexhaustible ingenuity; naturally mild and placable; honest and sincere in his own beliefs, and hitherto an advocate for freedom and toleration;

of personal character above all suspicion; and, finally, beyond all question, superior to all living Englishmen in every species of literary accomplishment; Sir Thomas More was of all men the best fitted to be the champion of the Church; the man most likely to present her cause in the most favourable light, and to produce the most plausible arguments against all her assailants. If Sir Thomas More could not defend the Church, her cause was hopeless.

Tunstal accordingly addressed himself to More, and entreated him to come to the help of the Church against her enemies. On the 7th of March, 1528,[1] he wrote to Sir Thomas, lamenting that "many children of iniquity had been found who endeavoured to introduce into England both the old and damnable heresy of Wickliffe, and also that of Luther by translating corrupt books into the Vernacular language, and printing them in great numbers; whereby it was greatly to be feared lest the Catholic faith should be endangered, unless good and learned men zealously opposed this malice by setting out in the common language books that should impugn these wicked doctrines. And forasmuch," he continues with elegant flattery, "as you can play the Demosthenes both in our native tongue and in Latin, and are wont to be a most zealous defender of Catholic truth in every assault, you will never be able to make a better use of any spare hours that you can redeem from your occupation, than by publishing in our native tongue something that will expose even to rude and simple people the crafty malice of the heretics, and make them better prepared against those impious enemies of the Church." The example of Henry, who had descended into the arena of literary conflict to defend the Seven Sacraments against Luther, was naturally cited to stimulate More to the task; and the invitation was accompanied by a formal licence to read the heretical books which were supposed to be so seriously threatening the

[1] 1527, says Tunstal's Register; but as it is added, "in the sixth year of our consecration," 1528 is meant; for Tunstal was consecrated October 19, 1522; Stubbs' *Registrum Sacrum Anglicanum.*

Catholic faith, and of which copies were forwarded to the champion of orthodoxy for his perusal; for, adds Tunstal, "it is of great avail towards victory to know the counsels of the enemy, and to understand perfectly what they think and whither they tend."[1]

Thus invited and encouraged by a prelate for whom he entertained the highest respect, and stimulated by the example of his sovereign, Sir Thomas More entered the lists as the Goliath of the falling Church. Tunstal's letter had not specified Tyndale by name as one of the "sons of iniquity" who were seducing the people from the faith; but More, in the course of his study of the volumes sent to him, speedily discovered that the translator of the New Testament was the most formidable of the antagonists whom he had to encounter; and the perusal of *The Wicked Mammon* and *The Obedience*, which reached England while he was engaged on his work, would wonderfully deepen this conviction. In little more than a year from the date of Tunstal's letter, Sir Thomas was ready with a considerable volume, occupying upwards of a hundred and eighty closely-printed folio pages in his collected works, entitled, "A dialogue of Sir Thomas More, Knight, one of the Council of our Sovereign Lord the King and Chancellor of his Duchy of Lancaster, wherein be treated divers matters, as of the veneration and worship of images and relics, praying to saints and going on pilgrimage; with many other things touching the pestilent sect of Luther and Tyndale, by the tone [one] begun in Saxony, and by the tother [other] laboured to be brought into England."[2]

Of this *Dialogue*, one of Tyndale's biographers has ventured to assert that "the English language had never been so prostituted before Sir Thomas More took up his pen. . . . No solitary selected expressions can convey an adequate idea of the virulence, not to say the verbosity, and fallacious

[1] Wilkins' *Concilia*, Vol. III. p. 711, from Tunstal's Register.

[2] *First* Edition, June, 1529; *Second*, May, 1530, says Ames; Sir Thomas More's *Works*, edition of 1557, pp. 104–288.

reasoning of this writer. It certainly would exhaust the patience of most readers, in the present day, to wade through his folio *Dialogue*."[1] But this is a grossly unfair misrepresentation of Sir Thomas's contribution to the defence of that Church for which he died a martyr. Virulence and verbosity may indeed, with perfect justice, be alleged against More's subsequent *Confutation* of Tyndale's reply to his *Dialogue*, his *Debellation of Salem and Byzance*, and other works known only to the intrepid reading of two or three unwearied scholars; but the *Dialogue* itself, though indulging occasionally in somewhat sharp abuse of Tyndale and the other Reformers, contains very little to justify such an epithet as *virulent*. There can be no battle without blows, no controversy without sharp words; and as we have hitherto protested against any condemnation of Tyndale because he employed strong and bitter language in assailing what seemed to him intolerable abuses in the religion of Christ, so on the same grounds we protest against the condemnation of More for employing equally strong language in repelling attacks upon what seemed to him most holy and sacred.

Nor could any epithet be less suitable to the *Dialogue* than *tedious*. It is anything but tedious; indeed, after many years' study of our older literature, we still doubt if any work of equal size had appeared in the English language since the days of Chaucer which could be less appropriately styled tedious. The reader whose patience is unequal to the perusal of More's folio *Dialogue* may conclude with certainty that he is totally destitute of any true literary taste. The *Dialogue* is written with consummate skill; and is probably as able and ingenious a defence as is anywhere to be met with, of those doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome, which Protestants have generally attacked as amongst the most fertile sources of corruption in religion. Tunstal had made a wise selection of a champion: there was no subtler wit in

[1] Anderson's *Annals*, Vol. I. p. 237.

England, no more facile pen, no better or more devoted son of the Church; and if Sir Thomas More could not defend the veneration of images and relics and going on pilgrimage, nothing but the rack and the stake could defend them.

The *Dialogue* professes to be a discussion between More and a messenger, whom some friend had sent to Chelsea, to consult him about the great religious events of the day, the trial and abjuration of Bilney, and the public burning of Tyndale's New Testament, after its formal condemnation by Tunstal. This friend, the *quod he* as Tyndale ironically calls him, is represented as leavened with a considerable partiality for the doctrines of the Reformers (an admission probably that this had come to be a common state of opinion among the educated classes); and he accordingly speaks to some extent as the apologist of the Reformers, repeats some of their objections to the ordinary teaching of the Church and the common religious observances of the day, and in fact exhibits a considerable amount of controversial fence, only, of course, to be disarmed and vanquished when the proper moment arrives for More to appear on the scene in all the glory of victory.

The structure of the book, it will thus be perceived, was eminently fitted to promote the purpose which it was intended to serve. It afforded More the opportunity of replying in the most impressive way to the customary arguments directed against the Church; it had the interest which a personal narrative possesses over a didactic treatise; it had the appearance of great candour and impartiality; whilst at the same time it left it perfectly free for Sir Thomas to evade any discussions that might seem inconvenient or injurious to his cause. Into many topics, accordingly, which were prominent among the complaints of the Reformers, he declines to enter. The ignorance and immorality of the clergy, for example, were open and notorious, and could neither be denied nor defended. Sir Thomas More, however, declines to enter into any full discussion of such topics; many of the clergy, he

admits, were "very lewd and naught," but indeed, he adds, "we are all bad, clergy and laity alike; may God make us better!" and with this confession he omits as impertinent any further treatment of an unpleasant subject, which more, perhaps, than any other had contributed to make the Reformation necessary; for the vices of the clergy were patent to all, and all had suffered by them.

All the ordinary arguments of the Romish controversialist are introduced and handled with great skill and force; the abstract metaphysical defences which have so often proved so serviceable to the Church of Rome are nowhere exhibited with more clearness and cogency; whilst the discussion is kept from being tedious by an interesting framework of pleasant gossip often containing charming autobiographical glimpses, by a varied narrative, by frequent anecdotes and stories (not always so decorous as they should be),[1] and by personal sallies against the English Reformers, who had hitherto displayed a most unworthy timidity in the hour of danger.[2] On the whole, *The Dialogue* produces on the mind of a reader who honestly attempts to study it without prejudice, the impression that it is the work of one who was a master of every device of literary skill, and who anticipated an easy victory over antagonists who were looked upon as a mere illiterate rabble; and, moreover, that it was certain to inflict material damage on the cause of the Reformation, unless it were speedily and effectually answered.

The Dialogue was published in June, 1529, and some time, probably, would elapse before Tyndale could procure a copy; but doubtless, long before the close of the year, whether at Antwerp or at Hamburg, he had become possessed of that book which in the eyes of the English bishops had completely demolished all his former writings, and he had studied it with

[1] Tyndale very properly censures the indecency of the legend of St. Valeri, as related by Sir Thomas.

[2] Up to this time the history of the Reformation in England had been a history of bold words followed by timid and scandalous recantations; witness Barnes, Bilney, Arthur, Garret, and many others.

the attention which it deserved. Tyndale had not sought a controversy with this champion of the Church; but Sir Thomas More's book left him no alternative. He had been singled out by name on the very title-page of *The Dialogue* and had been virtually challenged to the combat; and he had no choice except to take up the gauntlet thus thrown down, or to acknowledge by his silence that he was unable to defend the position which the Reformers in England had assumed. The cause of the Reformation in England had already been seriously compromised by the timidity of many of its leaders, who had retracted and abjured when threatened with punishment; and irreparable injury would be inflicted upon it if Sir Thomas More's work were to be left unanswered, to be paraded, of course, as unanswerable.

From the moment, therefore, when he received the work, Tyndale must have formed the resolution to reply to it. *The Practice of Prelates* may indeed be considered as in part an answer to *The Dialogue;* it treats of many of the subjects which More had discussed, and it contains several extremely severe reflections upon More's conduct in hiring out his pen to defend the Church, as Balaam had let out his prophetical skill for hire, in defiance of God and his conscience. This, however, would not suffice to meet the emergencies of the time; a specific reply to Sir Thomas More's book was imperatively required, and the preparation of it must have been Tyndale's chief occupation during the year 1530; and when in the close of that year or the commencement of the next he finally left Marburg for Antwerp, he had already completed his defence;[1] although, out of courtesy to his sovereign, who had been greatly offended by the plain speaking of *The Practice of Prelates*, its publication was for a short time delayed. Some time, however, in the spring or early summer of 1531 his *Answer* was committed to the press, and was issued, according to Joye,[2]

[1] See Vaughan's letters in next chapter.

[2] Joye's *Apology*.

by some printer in Amsterdam under the superintendence of Fryth.

Tyndale's *Answer* consists of two parts; "First," to use his own words, "he declareth what the Church is, and giveth a reason of certain words which Master More rebuketh in the translation of the New Testament; after that he answereth particularly unto every chapter which seemeth to have any appearance of truth throughout all his four books." As a literary production, Tyndale's *Answer* is unquestionably inferior to the work of his more skilful and more practised antagonist. It lacks the structural skill, the variety, the artistic grace, which make Sir Thomas's book pleasant even to the mere literary reader who has no interest in the theological controversy.

The argumentative value of the book, however, is vastly superior to its literary merit. Tyndale grapples in a plain, straightforward manner with the real essence of the controversy between the Church and the Reformers. With clear, hard-headed common sense he sets aside More's abstract metaphysical subtleties, and goes straight to the practical questions at issue. Sir Thomas, for example, had demonstrated with wonderful subtlety that the Church cannot err, that all that she ordains must be right and profitable, that it was sinful presumption in any individual, most especially in a layman, to presume to judge what so many popes and holy men had praised and practised. Tyndale with a single stroke cuts all the intricacies of this Gordian knot: he appeals to every man, in the use of that judgment which God had given him, to decide whether fact and experience confirmed what theory and assumption boasted of demonstrating. More demanded submission and obedience, Tyndale asserted freedom and the right of judgment. "The Holy Ghost," says he, "rebuketh the world for lack of judgment; the spiritual judgeth all things, even the very bottom of God's secrets, how much more ought we to judge our holy father's secrets! judge, therefore, reader, whether the pope with his, be the

Church, whether their authority be above the Scripture, whether all they teach without Scripture be equal with the Scripture; whether they *have* erred, and not only whether they *can*." Sir Thomas's arguments, thus brought to the test of experience, fare very badly in Tyndale's hands; what looked beautiful in theory had been depraved and corrupted by endless abuses in practice; that defence which seemed so strong when it set forth what *might* be, was completely overthrown when it was confronted with what *was* and *had been*.

In expounding his own opinions in the first part of the book, Tyndale is clear and copious; in his detailed criticism of *The Dialogue* he is brief and almost contemptuous. Throughout his *Answer*, indeed, he writes in a tone of extreme personal bitterness towards More, excited apparently by two reasons which it is fair that the reader in judging the work should bear in mind. In May, 1530, there had been assembled in London "certain of the chief prelates and chief learned men of the Universities," and by them, after long deliberation and discussion, it had been solemnly determined, in the presence of Henry, not only that Tyndale's works were full of heresies and errors, but especially that his translation of Scripture was "corrupted as well in the Old Testament as in the New;" and he was accordingly held up to public execration all over the kingdom.[1] Sir Thomas More was one of the chief members of this assembly; and Tyndale, whether on good or bad information, believed that his sinister wit and eloquence had been mainly instrumental in procuring the public condemnation of his books, and the official assertion by the sovereign that "it was not *necessary* for Christian men to have the New Testament in their native language." He expressly states that in the assembly "More was the special orator of the bishops to feign lies for their purpose."[2] This suspicion, which probably rested on a basis of fact, was

[1] Warham's *Proclamation, and Preachers' Bill:* Wilkins, Vol. III. p. 728.

[2] Tyndale's *Answer to More*, p. 168.

quite sufficient to have infused some bitterness into Tyndale's reply; how else but bitterly could he speak of the man whom he considered the great enemy to the free circulation of the Word of God in the English tongue?

But worse, far, than this, Tyndale had been informed that Sir Thomas was bribed by the bishops with promises of money, and prospects of advancement, to appear as the defender of doctrines and practices which, in his own conscience, he disbelieved and condemned. To this Tyndale not unnaturally makes perpetual allusion throughout his *Answer*. A single specimen will indicate to the reader what he thought of the motives of his antagonist:—"I exhort him in Christ," he says, "to take heed, for though *Judas* were wilier than his fellows to get lucre, yet he proved not most wise at the last end; neither though *Balaam* the false prophet had a clear sight to bring the curse of God upon the children of Israel for honour's sake, yet his covetousness did so blind his prophecy that he could not see his own end."[1] In this suspicion we know that Tyndale had been misled by mere baseless gossip; More, whatever his faults were, was quite incapable of the baseness here imputed to him; but the reader who remembers that Tyndale, on what seemed sufficient grounds, looked upon his antagonist as actuated by the vilest of motives, as little better than the traitor apostle or the prostitute prophet, will cease to be surprised at the tone of bitter contempt which pervades the *Answer*, and will allow that it was not more bitter than appearances warranted.

More's chief resentment was directed against Tyndale's New Testament; he declares that it was "corrupted and changed from the good and wholesome doctrine of Christ to devilish heresies of his own," it was "clean contrary to the Gospel of Christ;" "above a thousand texts in it were wrong and falsely translated;" it was incurably bad, and

[1] Tyndale's *Answer to More*, p. 15.

could only be amended by translating it all afresh, for, as he wittily remarked, "it is as easy to weave a new web of cloth as to sow up every hole in a net."[1] When pressed by *quod he* to give a more specific answer, Sir Thomas adduces as unpardonable heresies the substitution of *congregation* for *church*, *seniors* for *priests*, *love* for *charity*, *favour* for *grace*, *knowledge* for *confession*, *repentance* for *penance*, *troubled* for *contrite;* in fact, he alleged that Tyndale had, in general, neglected the use of those words which long custom had sanctioned as being appropriately ecclesiastical, and had adopted others which had no peculiar association with theology.

To this charge Tyndale's answer was easy and obvious; not only was his rendering in accordance with the strict signification of the original, but the terms which he had avoided were depraved by so many abuses that their use could only mislead the unwary reader. The *Church* had come to be synonymous with the clergy, "the multitude of shaven, shorn, and oiled;" the *priests* had almost been confounded with the old heathen priests, their real origin and their real purpose having almost dropped out of sight; *charity* had ceased to be the name of an inward, Divine grace, and denoted only certain outward ostentatious deeds sanctioned by the ecclesiastics; *confession*, *penance*, *grace*, *contrition* were "the great juggling words wherewith, as St. Peter prophesied, the clergy made merchandise of the people." In such circumstances, to continue to employ terms which could only convey erroneous ideas to the mind of the ignorant reader, would be to perpetuate error, and to throw the sanction of Scripture over abuses which had sprung up in defiance or ignorance of Scripture. All such technical language, therefore, Tyndale avoided, and employed instead plain words which had not yet been introduced into the nomenclature of the Church, and were free from any misleading ecclesiastical

[1] *Dialogue*, B. III. c. viii.

associations.[1] The subsequent revisions of the English Bible have not in all cases followed Tyndale's views; but circumstances have altered since his time, and there is no longer any serious apprehension of countenancing error or superstition by the use of terms which have been so long isolated from their former associations. And yet it may be doubted whether even amongst ourselves the popular conception of the noblest of Christian graces has not been materially lowered and injured by styling it *charity*, as Sir Thomas More recommended, and not *love*, as our translator originally rendered it.

On the other great themes of the *Dialogue*, the worship of images and relics, going on pilgrimage, and religious ceremonies in general, Tyndale's answer is plain, clear, and convincing. All ceremonies, he admits, had, doubtless, been instituted for some laudable purpose; they had once had a meaning, and so long as that meaning continued to be known they might have been used, if not profitably, at least innocuously. It had been so under the Old Testament; the ceremonies of the law of Moses were "signs preaching unto the people one thing or another;" and so long as the people observed and understood them as such, they were of service to the Jews. But in process of time the meaning of the ceremonies was lost, whilst the ceremonies continued, and came to be valued for their own sakes, and to be substitutes for those real virtues in heart and life of which they were merely the symbols and sacraments. So, also, had it been in the Christian Church. Signs, sacraments, ceremonies, "three words of one signification," had been borrowed from the Jews or invented by the zeal of pious worshippers.

"At the beginning there were significations unto them. And so long as it was understood what was meant by them, and they did but serve the people, and preach one thing or another unto them, they hurted not greatly: though that the free servant of Christ ought not to be brought violently into captivity under the bondage of traditions of men; as

[1] Sir Thomas More justly objected to *seniors*, that it only called up incongruous French associations; Tyndale admits this objection, and had already, he says, substituted for it the genuine English *elders*.

St. Augustine complaineth in his days, how that the condition and state of the Jews was more easy than the Christians under traditions; so sore had the tyranny of the shepherds invaded the flock already in those days. And then what just cause have, we to complain of our captivity now; unto whose yoke from that time hitherto, even twelve hundred years long, hath ever somewhat more weight been added to, for to keep us down and to confirm us in blindness: howbeit, as long as the significations bode [remained], they hurted not the soul, though they were painful unto the body. Nevertheless, I impute this our grievous fall into so extreme and horrible blindness (wherein we are so deep and so deadly brought asleep) unto nothing so much as unto the multitude of ceremonies. For as soon as the prelates had set up such a rabble of ceremonies, they thought it superfluous to preach the plain text any longer, and the law of God, faith of Christ, love toward our neighbour, and the order of our justifying and salvation (forasmuch as all such things were played before the people's faces daily in the ceremonies, and every child wist the meaning); but got them unto allegories, feigning them every man after his own brain, without rule, almost on every syllable; and from thence unto disputing, and wasting their brains about words, not attending [*i.e.*, heeding] the significations; until at the last the lay-people had lost the meaning of the ceremonies, and the prelates the understanding of the plain text, and of the Greek, and Latin, and *specially of the Hebrew*, which is most of need to be known, and of all phrases, the proper manner of speakings, and borrowed speech of the Hebrews.

"And as soon as the signification of the ceremonies was lost, and the priests preached Christ no longer, then the common people began to wax mad and out of their minds upon the ceremonies. And that trust and confidence, which the ceremonies preached to be given unto God's Word and Christ's blood, that same they turned unto the ceremony itself; as though a man were so mad to forget that the bush at the tavern-door did signify wine to be sold within, but would believe that the bush itself would quench his thirst. And so they became servants unto the ceremonies: ascribing their justifying and salvation unto them, supposing that it was nothing else to be a Christian man than to serve ceremonies, and him most Christian that most served them; and contrariwise, him that was not popish and ceremonial, no Christian man at all. For I pray you, for what cause worship we our spiritualty so highly, or wherefore think we their prayers better than the poor layman's, than for their disguisings and ceremonies? Yea, and what other virtue see we in the holiest of them, than to wait upon dumb superstitious ceremonies?

"Yea, and how cometh it that a poor layman, having wife and twenty children, and not able to find [maintain] them, though all his neighbours know his necessity, shall not get with begging for Christ's sake, in a long summer's day, enough to find them two days honestly; when if a disguised monster come, he shall, with an hour's lying in the pulpit, get

enough to find thirty or forty sturdy lubbers a month long, of which the weakest shall be as strong in the belly, when he cometh unto the manger, as the mightiest porter in the weigh-house [custom-house], or best courser that is in the king's stable? Is there any other cause than disguising and ceremonies? For the deeds of the ceremonies we count better than the deeds which God commandeth to be done to our neighbour at his need. Who thinketh it as good a deed to feed the poor, as to stick up a candle before a post, or as to sprinkle himself with holy water? Neither is it possible to be otherwise, as long as the signification is lost. For what other thing can the people think, than that such deeds be ordained of God; and because, as it is evident, they serve not our neighbour's need, to be referred unto the person of God, and He, though He be a Spirit, yet served therewith? And then he cannot but forth on [thenceforth] dispute, in his blind reason, that as God is greater than man, so is that deed that is appointed to serve God greater than that which serveth man. And then, when it is not possible to think them ordained for nought, what can I otherwise think than that they were ordained to justify; and that I should be holy thereby, according to the pope's doctrine; as though God were better pleased, when I sprinkled myself with water, or set up a candle before a block, than if I fed or clothed, or holp at his need, him whom He so tenderly loveth that He gave His own Son unto the death for him, and commanded me to love him as myself?

"And when the people began to run that way, the prelates were glad, and holp to heave after with subtle allegories and falsifying the Scripture; and went and hallowed the ceremonies, to make them more worshipful, that the lay people should have them in greater estimation and honour, and to be afraid to touch them, for reverence unto the holy charm that was said over them; and affirmed also that Christ's death had purchased such grace unto the ceremonies to forgive sin and to justify. O monster! Christ's death purchased grace for man's soul, to repent of evil, and to believe in Christ for remission of sin, and to love the law of God, and his neighbour as himself; which is the true worshipping of God in the spirit; and He died not to purchase such honour unto unsensible things, that man to his dishonour should do them honourable service, and receive his salvation of them.

"This I have declared unto you that ye might see and feel everything sensibly. For I intend not to lead you in darkness. Neither though twice two cranes make not four wild geese[1], would I, therefore, that ye should believe that twice two made not four. Neither intend I to prove unto you, that Paul's steeple is the cause why Thames is broke in about Erith, or that Tenterden steeple is the cause of the decay of Sandwich haven, as Master More jesteth. Nevertheless, this I would were persuaded unto you (as it is true), that the building of them and such like, through the false

[1] One of Sir Thomas's jokes in his *Dialogue*.

faith that we have in them, is the decay of all the havens in England, and of all the cities, towns, highways, and shortly of the whole commonwealth. For since these false monsters crope up into our consciences, and robbed us of the knowledge of our Saviour Christ, making us believe in such pope-holy works, and to think that there was none other way unto heaven, we have not ceased to build them abbeys, cloisters, colleges, chauntries, and cathedral churches with high steeples, striving and envying one another who should do most. And as for the deeds that pertain unto our neighbours and unto the commonwealth, we have not regarded at all, as things which seemed no holy works, or such as God would not once look upon. And, therefore, we left them unseen to, until they were past remedy, or past our power to remedy them; inasmuch as our slow bellies, with their false blessings, had juggled away from us that wherewith they might have been holpen in due season. So that the silly poor man (though he had haply no wisdom to express his mind, or that he durst not, or that Master More fashioneth his tale as he doth other men's, to jest out the truth), saw that neither Goodwin Sands, nor any other cause alleged, was the decay of Sandwich haven, so much as that the people had no lust to maintain the commonwealth, for blind devotion which they have to pope-holy works.

This specimen of Tyndale's *Answer* will, far better than any lengthened description, enable the reader to judge of the style and execution of the work, the clearness and occasional bitterness of its language, the force and practical character of its reasonings. Tyndale does not, like More, make any systematic attempt at employing wit as an auxiliary to his argument; but he had a shrewd humour of his own, and when he does condescend to play at satire, his retorts are occasionally very happy. Thus, in criticising Sir Thomas's elaborate distinctions concerning the amount of reverence implied in *doulia*, *hyperdoulia*, and *latria*, he asks with exquisite irony, to which of these varieties of reverence should be referred "the worship done by More and others to my lord the cardinal's hat;" alluding, of course, to the ridiculous scene which he has described in his *Practice of Prelates*. He shows considerable wit also in the manner in which he twits More, a man who "was *bigamus* and past the grace of his neck-verse," with coming forward in the strange character of the champion of the celibacy of the clergy.

There is nothing finer in More's *Dialogue* than the

ironical comments of Tyndale upon Sir Thomas's fundamental proposition, that the Church could not err in its judgments; "whatsoever, therefore, the Church, that is to wit, the pope and his brood say, it is God's Word; though it be not written, nor confirmed with miracle, nor yet good living; yea, and though they say to-day this, and to-morrow the contrary, all is good enough and God's Word; yea, and though one pope condemn another, nine or ten popes a-row with all their works for heretics, as it is to see in the stories, yet all is right and none error. And thus good night and good rest! Christ is brought asleep, and laid in His grave, and the door sealed to, and the men of arms about the grave to keep Him down with pole-axes. For that is the surest argument to help at need, and to be rid of these babbling heretics, that so bark at the holy spiritualty with Scripture, being thereto [besides] wretches of no reputation, neither cardinals nor bishops, nor yet great beneficed men; yea, and without totquots and pluralities, having no hold but the very Scripture, whereunto they cleave as burs, so fast that they cannot be pulled away, save with very singeing of them off!" [1]

His answer to Sir Thomas's violent peroration is equally cogent in its argument and its sarcasm. "Look on Tyndale," said More, "how in his wicked book of *Mammonis*, and after in his malicious book of *Obedience*, he showed himself so puffed up with the poison of pride, malice, and envy that it is more than marvel that the skin can hold together. . . . He barketh against the Sacraments much more than Luther. . . . He knoweth that all the fathers teach that there is the fire of purgatory, which I marvel why he feareth so little, but if he be at a plain point with himself to go straight to hell." [2] To this, the most bitter passage in the *Dialogue*, Tyndale replies with calm sarcasm: "He intendeth to purge here unto the uttermost of his power; and hopeth that death will end and finish his purgation. And if there be any other purging,

[1] Tyndale's *Answer to More*, p. 102.

[2] More's *Dialogue*, p. 283; edition of 1557.

he will commit it to God, and take it as he findeth it, when he cometh at it; and in the meantime take no thought therefore, but for this that is present, wherewith all saints were purged, and were taught so to be. And Tyndale marvelleth what secret pills they take to purge themselves, which not only will not purge here with the cross of Christ, but also buy out their purgatory there of the pope, for a groat or a sixpence."[1]

If More's *Dialogue* left Tyndale no choice but to attempt a reply or acknowledge himself vanquished, Tyndale's *Answer* placed More precisely in the same predicament. Tyndale had shown himself not unworthy to enter the arena with the greatest genius in England; he had defended with unquestionable ability the opinions of the Reformers; he had re-stated with the most cogent clearness the objections which More had evaded in his *Dialogue;* he had roughly and effectually silenced many of the arguments of his antagonist; and, beyond a doubt, he remained in several points of importance master of the field. Such an enemy could not be disregarded. What stronger proof, indeed, could be given of the ability of Tyndale's work than the fact that Sir Thomas More, now Lord Chancellor of England, and involved in the endless occupations of the chief legal adviser of the crown at a most momentous crisis in English history, felt constrained to prolong the controversy?

Tyndale's *Answer* had not been printed till about midsummer of 1531; but before the month of May of the next year,[2] Sir Thomas had published the first part of an elaborate *Confutation*, which he continued after his resignation of his office, till it swelled into five hundred folio pages. In truth, the refutation of Tyndale may be said to have been More's chief employment down to the day of his death. It forms one of the main themes of his *Apology*, written after he had

[1] Tyndale's *Answer to More*, p. 214.

[2] The date is ascertained by the express allusion on the title-page to his being still Lord Chancellor, and he resigned that office in May, 1532.

resigned his office; he recurs to the subject again in his treatise entitled the *Debellation of Salem and Byzance;*[1] and once more he pursues it through an "Answer to the Poisoned Book, which a nameless heretic [Tyndale] hath named the Supper of the Lord." Altogether the controversy with Tyndale, directly or indirectly, occupies upwards of a thousand folio pages in the collected edition of the great Lord Chancellor's writings.

This statement alone is almost tantamount to the assertion that Sir Thomas had the worst of the controversy; and probably no one who has read the whole of More's writings on the subject will venture to dispute this assumption. Brevity is the soul of wit, it is the essence of retort; and a *Confutation*, ten times the size of the book which it was intended to demolish, was, *ipso facto*, a failure. Such, as More himself confesses, was the general verdict of contemporary readers. He had commenced his *Confutation* with the intention of elaborately answering Tyndale sentence by sentence, and almost word by word; or as he himself somewhat vainGloriously expresses it, he trusted "to draw the serpent out of his dark den, as Hercules drew Cerberus from hell into the light," and to expose Tyndale so that he should "have never a dark corner to creep into, able to hide his head in." But when he came to pen his *Apology*, in 1533, he had to confess that men charged his *Confutation* with being "over long and therefore tedious to read;" and, moreover, that the learned denied the force of his reasonings, and condemned his uncourteous treatment of Tyndale, and his

[1] More's *Apology* was in reality an answer to a clever treatise, entitled *The Pacifier:* and the *Debellation* was a reply to the rejoinder which the author of the *Pacifier* had issued under the title of *Salem and Byzance*. The author of the *Pacifier* was a lawyer, Christopher Saintgerman by name, whose writings were distinguished, as More admits, by their mild and charitable spirit. His *Dialogues on the Laws of England, and the Grounds of those Laws*, exhibit an ability beyond his age, and have continued to enjoy a certain reputation down to our own day. His mother, it is noteworthy, was Anne Tyndale, of Hockwold, in Norfolkshire, the aunt of Edward Tyndale, of Pull Court, according to the theory of the genealogists, and, if so, aunt also of the Reformer.

unworthy attempts to conceal the faults and vices of the clergy.[1]

The biographer of Tyndale will therefore be excused if, after carefully perusing the whole controversy, he endorses this decision of Sir Thomas More's contemporaries. Such a man as More could not, of course, be silenced; nay, it was impossible that he should write so much without saying much that was characterised by ingenuity and good sense. He defended his own cause by subtle arguments; he exposed some minor flaws in Tyndale's translation, and some untenable positions in his reasonings, for Tyndale entertained some singular opinions; but on the whole, the *Confutation* was a failure. The spirit of the age was with Tyndale and the Reformers, and Sir Thomas's voluminous *Confutation* was powerless against the great movement of the time.

Time eventually confuted the *Confutation;* when it was begun, the supremacy of the Church was still recognised in England; before it was finished, the power had passed into the hands of the sovereign, and the approaching downfall of the papal authority cast its shadows before, in such ominous transactions as the divorce of Catherine and the marriage of Anne, in defiance of the pope's express prohibitions.

The *Dialogue* had been eminently readable, but the *Confutation* and subsequent polemical works are tedious. The *Dialogue*, though occasionally bitter, did not, on the whole, transgress those limits which in a controversy of such vast importance were fairly allowable: the *Confutation* is extremely virulent. Not to speak of the ribald abuse poured forth in season and out of season upon Luther, the language applied to Tyndale is altogether unpardonable. He is no longer simply a heretic, swollen with pride and malice against the Church, he is "a beast," discharging a "filthy foam of blasphemies out of his brutish beastly mouth;" he is "a shameful, shameless, unreasonable, railing ribald," he has learned his heresies "from his own father the devil that is in

[1] Sir Thomas More's *Works*, pp. 845, etc.

hell;" he is one of the "hellhounds that the devil hath in his kennel."[1]

A single continuous criticism will show how entirely More had lost all self-control. Tyndale had spoken unceremoniously of the writings of Thomas Aquinas, the angel of the schools, as mere "draff;" and Sir Thomas thus fiercely retaliates: "This glorious saint of God . . . doth this devilish drunken soul abominably blaspheme, and calleth them [*i.e.*, Thomas Aquinas and such like] liars and falsifiers of Scripture, and maketh them no better than draff. But this drowsy drudge hath drunken so deep in the devil's dregs, that but if he wake and repent himself the sooner, he may hap ere aught long to fall into the mashing-fat, and turn himself into draff as [which] the hogs of hell shall feed upon and fill their bellies thereof."[2] We have throughout this biography attempted to measure out impartial justice to both parties in the great religious controversy of the time; but surely such a passage as this—and many more such flowers of oratory may be culled from the same garden—must be held to be a conclusive disproof of the delusion, to which some fondly cling, that it is only amongst the illiterate and the Reformers that we find violent and abusive language. Tyndale was bitter and fierce, but he certainly never defiled his pen with such Billingsgate as this; and whilst some consideration is surely due to an exile who had been persecuted for his faith, and who moreover protested against any use of physical violence; who shall venture to claim equal allowance for the Lord Chancellor of England, armed with full authority to burn all heretics, and using this authority without scruple in defiance of those principles of toleration and religious freedom which he had advocated in his youth?

There can be little doubt that amongst the causes which thus lashed into fury the man who had formerly advocated toleration, and whose temperament naturally disposed him to gentle and lenient measures, considerable weight must be

[1] More's *Confutation*, pp. 446, 681, etc.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 679.

attached to Tyndale's insinuation that, like Judas, he had bartered away his conscience for gold. We have given Tyndale's charge, and it is only justice to Sir Thomas More to insert his reply. "In good faith," says he, "I will not say nay, but that some good and honourable men of the clergy would, in reward of my good will and my labour against these heretics, have given me much more than ever I did or could deserve [so that Tyndale's accusation was not entirely groundless]: but I dare take God and them also to record, that all they could never *feef* me with one penny thereof, but, as I plainly told them, I would rather have cast their money into the Thames than take it. For albeit they were, as indeed they were, both good men and honourable, yet look I for my thank of God that is their better, and for whose sake I take the labour."[1]

More also endeavours to clear himself from the charge of having exhibited extreme cruelty towards the unfortunate heretics who had fallen into his hands, and he denies in the strongest possible terms, the truth of several of the stories which subsequently figured in the pages of Foxe; but as his denial is accompanied with an important qualification,[2] and as he confesses that "there was no man that any meddling had with them [the heretics] into whose hands they were more loth to come," and even declares that "none of them had wrong but that it were, for they were burned no sooner," his defence can hardly be considered a brilliant success.

On the whole, the perusal of this long-continued controversy is not a pleasant task. The spectacle of two men, so good and so honest as Tyndale and More, heaping terms of abuse upon each other, is not one that can gratify any well-constituted mind; and one feels disposed to cast a mantle of discreet

[1] Sir Thomas More's *Apology: Works*, p. 867.

[2] Thus, when denying that he had caused any one to be bound to a tree in his garden and beaten, he admits that "*he had caused such things* to be done by the officers of the Marshalsea to people guilty of *sacrilege in a church, carrying away the pix or casting out the blessed sacrament from it*," an admission susceptible of considerable latitude in the interpretation.

reticence over the unhappy scene. We have endeavoured to judge of the contest without prejudice, and with due allowance for the excitement and irritation incident to theological debates; and we believe that few who take the trouble to read the controversy will doubt on which side the victory lay. Sir Thomas More's reputation suffered an irreparable injury by his share in the controversy; he lost the sympathy of the public by his unworthy abuse of his antagonist, without gaining the credit of having sufficiently established his own positions. Whatever was gained in the controversy was gained by Tyndale. As the translator of the New Testament, the author of the *Mammon* and the *Obedience*, he already exercised a considerable influence over public opinion in England. Sir Thomas More's attack directed public attention still more strongly to him; and the skill and courage with which he met and foiled the great champion of the Church made his name familiar to all Englishmen, enlisted their sympathies in his favour as their protector against a common enemy, and secured for his works and for the doctrines of the Reformers that favourable consideration which was the best means of promoting their success.

The chancel wall of Old Chelsea Church is still adorned with the handsome marble monument which Sir Thomas More had, in his lifetime, erected for himself; over it, as if in triumphant superiority, there was placed about 1820, by some churchwarden ignorant probably of all this history, the memorial tablet of one of the *Tyndale* family. Could the most ingenious sculptor have devised a plainer or more significant allegorical record of the controversy?

CHAPTER X.

TYNDALE AT ANTWERP: NEGOTIATIONS TO INDUCE HIM TO RETURN TO ENGLAND: INTERVIEWS WITH VAUGHAN: HIS CONTINUED LITERARY LABOURS.

A.D. 1531.

THE reins which had slipped from the relaxing grasp of Wolsey had fallen into the hands of one who better understood the spirit of the age. Under the steady guidance of Cromwell, England entered upon a new policy, which resulted in the final emancipation of the country from the spiritual tyranny of a foreign potentate. To the accomplishment of this great purpose, Cromwell's energy was for years steadily directed; but whilst many were willing to assist and to applaud him in his efforts, there were few indeed able to understand the clear and comprehensive plan of action which he had laid down. Of those who surrounded the king, and who from various motives acquiesced in the royal policy, Cromwell could not as yet depend upon a single individual as an able and intelligent ally.

The very policy, however, which Cromwell was so steadily pursuing had already been recommended by Tyndale. "*One king, one law in the realm;* no class of men exempt from the temporal sword, no law except the law of the land;" such had been the principles advocated in the *Obedience of a Christian Man;* such were the principles which Cromwell wished to establish as the starting-point of the new political life of England. It was probably on the ground of this community of purpose that Cromwell now became anxious to induce Tyndale to return to England, in order, perhaps, that

his powerful pen might be enlisted in defence of the great cause which the new minister was so anxious to promote. The idea is certainly not improbable; although Cromwell was much mistaken in his man, if he supposed that he should find in Tyndale one ready to defend and follow him in all the crooked and devious ways to which political exigencies reduced him.

Some have even supposed that this was the real purpose of that visit of Coverdale to Tyndale which Foxe has assigned to 1529, but which later writers, when they admit it at all, are inclined to place in the following year. This supposition, indeed, has been advanced without any documentary support; it is, however, certain that at the period at which we have now arrived, the commencement of 1531, attempts were made by various agents, and apparently with Henry's knowledge and concurrence, to induce the exile to return to England; and to this we owe at last, after so many years of uncertainty and conjecture, a clear and authentic glimpse of the illustrious translator—the first since the description of him by his generous host, Humphrey Monmouth. For a time, therefore, Tyndale emerges from the obscurity in which he had hitherto been surrounded; not the voice of the prophet alone, but the personal history of the man, engages our attention and appeals to our sympathies.

Stephen Vaughan, one of the envoys to the Low Countries, an old friend of Cromwell, and not unfavourable to the opinions of the Reformers, had been specially commissioned to discover Tyndale's place of residence, and, if possible, induce him to return to England; and he thus reports progress to his royal master:—

"Most excellent Prince, and my most redoubted Sovereign, mine humble observation due unto your Majesty. My mind continually labouring and thirsting, most dread and redoubted Sovereign, with exceeding desire to attain *the knowledge of such things as your Majesty commanded me to learn and practise in these parts, and thereof to advertise you from time to time*, as the case should require:—And being often dismayed

with the regard of so many mischances, as always obviate and meet with my labours and policies; whereby the same, after great hope had to do something acceptable unto your Highness' pleasure, turn suddenly to become frustrate and of none effect; bringeth me doubtless into right great sorrow and inquietude, considering that where [whereas] of late, I have written three sundry letters unto *William Tyndale,* and the same sent, for the more surety, to three sundry places, to Frankfort, Hamburg, and Marburg:—I then, not [being] assured in which of the same he was, and had very good hope, after *I heard say in England, that he would, upon the promise of your Majesty, and of your most gracious safe conduct, be content to repair and come into England,* that I should, partly therewith, and partly with such other persuasions as I then devised in my said letters, and finally with a promise which I made him that whatsoever surety he would reasonably desire, for his safe coming in and going out of your realm, my friends should labour to have the same granted by your Majesty, that now the bruit and fame of such things, as, since my writing to him, hath chanced within your realm, should provoke the man, not only to be minded to the contrary of that whereunto I had thought, without difficulty, to have easily brought him, but also to suspect my persuasions to be made to his more peril and danger than, as I think, if he were verily persuaded and placed before you (your most gracious benignity, and piteous regard natural, [and] custom, always had towards your humble subjects considered, and specially to those which, knowledging their offences, shall humbly require your most gracious pardon), he should ever have need to doubt or fear.[1] Like as your Majesty, as well by his letter written by his own hand, sent to me for answer of my said letters, as also by the

[1] The meaning of this long and involved sentence is, that Vaughan had written to Tyndale, and put everything in the most favourable way, but that the report of what had occurred in England since he wrote might undo all his efforts, and make Tyndale afraid to come. It is, in fact, a hint to Henry that if he wished to have Tyndale in England, he must take care to restrain the severity of the bishops.

copy of another letter of his, answering some other person, whom your Majesty perhaps had commanded to persuade by like means, may plainly apperceive: which letters, like as together I received from the party, so send I herewith enclosed to your Highness.

"And whereas I lately apperceived by certain letters directed to me from Mr. Fitzwilliam, treasurer of your household, that I should endeavour myself, by all the ways . . . . and means I could study and devise, to obtain a copy of the book which, I wrote, was finished by Tyndale, answering to a book put forth in the English tongue by my Lord Chancellor, and the same should send to your Majesty with all celerity; I have undoubtedly so done, and did before the receipt thereof; howbeit, I neither can get any of them, nor, as yet, come to the knowledge that any of them should be put forth [had been printed]; but, being put forth, I shall then not fail, with all celerity, to send one unto your Highness."[1]

This letter was written from Barrow, *i.e.* Bergen-op-Zoom, on the 26th of January, 1530 (by which 1531 is of course meant), and seems to have been Vaughan's first despatch to the sovereign whom he served, although not his first communication as envoy to the Government at home. Unfortunately the two letters from Tyndale, which were enclosed in the dispatch, and which would be, in our ignorance of his history, so acceptable to us, have not been preserved; and the interesting biographical details which they unquestionably contained are, in the meantime, lost, let us hope, not beyond the reach of recovery. We can gather, however, from Vaughan's words, that the accession of Cromwell to power had somewhat changed the policy of England's chief statesman towards Tyndale. The man who had been denounced in May as a perverter of Scripture, was now solicited to return with promises of protection from the violence of the bishops; and more agents than one were employed on what was evidently deemed a matter of some political importance.

[1] Cotton MSS., *Galba*, B. x., 46 of new notation. The letter is slightly damaged.

It is quite clear, and this is a point of considerable consequence, that there was no intention of trapanning the illustrious translator by false representations, so as to get him within the power of his enemies; whatever end Vaughan had in view menaced no danger to Tyndale. In this project of inducing Tyndale to return to England, Henry was evidently interested; although, as will be more apparent from the sequel of the correspondence, he was not at all persuaded of the propriety of a step which had been suggested by his new minister, and was in truth only "convinced against his will."

Of this despatch an exact copy was transmitted to Cromwell, with the accompanying confidential communication, which makes it still more apparent that the scheme for bringing Tyndale into England was not of Henry's but of Cromwell's devising:—

"Sir, here see you my rudeness and inability to be a writer to so great a Prince; but his gracious benignity encourageth this to do; which chancing [if it happen] to be acceptable to his Majesty, shall be to me an exceeding pleasure, and otherwise the contrary. Wherefore I most heartily pray you to wait a time for the delivery thereof, to be taken when you think his Highness will immediately look upon them; for then may it chance, if any fault be, your goodness towards me will excuse the same in the best manner. Herewith I send you the copy of *Tyndale's* letters, which he sent to me; the other, for lack of leisure, I could not copy, being so long a matter. The *Dialogue of Ockham* [treatise by William of Ockham, a well-known schoolman, written against the pretensions of the pope] I have delivered to Mr. Tuke [one of the royal secretaries], who will bring you it in his mail [his courier's bag], and will depart within four days next.[1] I pray you let me know how the King taketh my letters, as soon as is possible. *It is unlikely to get Tyndale into England, when he daily heareth so many things from thence which feareth him.* After his

[1] Bryan Tuke may also have been employed, like Vaughan, in attempting to discover Tyndale's abode, and to persuade him to return.

book, answering my Lord Chancellor's book be put forth, I think he will write no more. *The man is of a greater knowledge than the King's Highness doth take him for, which well appeareth by his works. Would God he were in England!*"[1]

The proceedings in England, to which Vaughan again alludes, as likely to operate unfavourably on Tyndale's mind, were, doubtless, the vigorous steps taken by Stokesley and Sir Thomas More to enforce the prohibitions of the royal proclamation, and to punish all who were suspected of leaning towards the Reformation. It was about this time that Tyndale's brother John was arrested, along with Thomas Patmore, a draper of London, and was taken before the Star-Chamber, charged with receiving New Testaments from abroad and selling them. He was also accused of sending money to his brother, and carrying on correspondence with him. Both were found guilty, and were sentenced to be exhibited for public ridicule at the Standard in Cheapside, mounted on horseback, with their faces turned ignominiously to the horses' tails, and their cloaks hung round with the prohibited Testaments which they had imported. They were also compelled to pay a considerable fine before they were liberated.[2]

And this was not an isolated deed of violence; throughout the Diocese of London, determined and systematic efforts were made to discover and seize all who had ventured to express opinions contrary to the received doctrines or injurious to the established ceremonies of the Church; and especially were those marked out for vengeance who were known or suspected to be in possession of Tyndale's writings. Of these violent proceedings Tyndale could not be ignorant; indeed, it seems certain that his bosom-friend, John Fryth, had ventured into England in the month of March of this year,[3] and on his

[1] The rest of the letter is uninteresting to us.

[2] Harleian MSS., 425.

[3] In Stokesley's *Register*, the process against Fryth, June 20, 1533, is regularly entered, and contains the following statement:—'Interrogatus fatebatur quod venit ultimo a partibus ultra-marinis circa festum Sancti Jacobi ultimo præteritum et *quod fuit in Anglia in quadragesimâ ad duos annos elapsos*.' It appears, therefore

return he would, of course, faithfully report what he had seen and heard in his native land. It is not surprising, therefore, that Vaughan should speak of the intelligence coming from England as likely to counteract all his efforts to induce Tyndale to return to a country where his name was held up to public abhorrence as one of the great heresiarchs of the age. Undismayed, however, by the untoward aspect of affairs, Vaughan continued his efforts to accomplish the commission which had been entrusted to him; and was successful, as his next letter apprises us, in procuring a copy of Tyndale's reply to Sir Thomas More. On what was then the first day of the New Year, Lady-day, he thus writes to Cromwell from Antwerp:—

"So it is that as I lately advertised you by my letters [not preserved] that I have obtained a copy of the third part of Tyndale's book against my Lord Chancellor's book, which is so rudely scribbled [*i.e.*, it was a MS. copy, the book not being yet printed], that I am constrained to write it again, and am writing of it as busily as I can. When that part is written I intend to labour to obtain the other part, which I will presently[1] write in a fair book and send unto the King's Highness. It containeth, with all the three parts, as I am informed, three quires of paper thoroughly written. Sir, he hath made in the beginning of the same an epistle to the King's Highness, *as I am informed*, which as yet is not come into his hand. I would gladly have your advice whether it be best that I shall put it to his book as he putteth it, or otherwise. I am in doubt whether the King's Highness will be pleased to receive any such epistle from him or not; I pray you let me have herein your advice, as soon as it is possible. I promise you he maketh my Lord Chancellor such an answer as I am loth to praise or dispraise. *No work that ever he made is written in so gentle a style.* Sir, this work will he not put in

that Fryth was in England in Lent two years before 1533, that is, in February and March, 1531: for in 1531, Lent began February 22. See extract from Stokesley's *Register*, in Townsend's Foxe, Vol. v. Appendix xxii.

[1] Such is probably the meaning of Vaughan: his word is clearly *wyntly*, but what that means I do not pretend to say.

print till he know how the King's Highness will accept and take it. If he hear that his Grace take it well, it may then, peradventure, be a means to bring him into England. Howbeit, whether he come or not come into England, he will make no more works after this [*i.e.*, Vaughan supposes so]. He would no doubt come into England, and submit him to the King's Highness, if he had any sure hope of his gracious favour. I can little or nothing profit with him by my letters, for so much as the man hath me greatly suspected. Howbeit I have stayed the impression [printing] of this book hitherto, and will hereafter do as much as I can."[1]

Vaughan's words in this letter almost suggest that he was in communication with some friend of Tyndale: and in a few weeks more his patience received its full reward. The very man of whom he had been so long in search requested an interview with him. Vaughan was as much taken by surprise as Obadiah was when Elijah appeared before him; and in the full excitement of the impression which Tyndale's earnest words had produced upon his mind, he sat down to narrate the whole proceedings to one little likely to enter into his feelings. His letter is of surpassing interest:—

"Please it your Majesty to be advertised, how of late I obtained a copy of one part [the third part] of Tyndale's book, answering to the book put forth by my Lord Chancellor, whereof immediately I gave knowledge to my master, Mr. Cromwell, and him required thereof to advertise your Highness, as appertained. Which copy being rudely written, interlined, and difficult to be read, methought uncomely, and not meet in so vile array to be sent to the hands of your Royal Majesty. The regard whereof moved me to write it again, that it might come to your most gracious hands the more legible and easy to your reading. Which part I have herewith sent unto your Highness; thinking that the matter therein contained, for the modest order thereof in regard of

[1] State Paper Office: Miscellaneous Letters, Henry VIII. Second Series. This letter has never been printed before.

his former writing, will somewhat better like you than some other of his works, which he hath, with less advisement, more rashness, and ruder spirit, put forth before this time. This part, which your Grace receives now, is but a third or fourth part of his whole work; but comprehendeth in effect the substance and pith of the other parts; where he particularly answereth to every chapter of my Lord's book, with such grounds as he hath laid in his first part, though he use in it a larger circumstance. The *second* part I have in likewise obtained, which I will in likewise write, and send unto your Grace, with all convenient speed and celerity.

"The day before the date hereof [*i.e.*, April 17, as appears from Cromwell's reply] *I spake with Tyndale* without the town of Antwerp, and by this means: He sent a certain person to seek me, whom he had advised to say that a certain friend of mine, unknown to the messenger, was very desirous to speak with me; praying me to take pains to go unto him, to such place as he should bring me. Then I to the messenger, 'What is your friend, and where is he?' 'His name I know not,' said he; 'but if it be your pleasure to go where he is, I will be glad thither to bring you.' Thus, doubtful what this matter meant, I concluded to go with him, and followed him till he brought me without the gates of Antwerp, into a field lying nigh unto the same; where was abiding me this said Tyndale. At our meeting, 'Do you not know me?' said this Tyndale. 'I do not well remember you,' said I to him. 'My name,' said he, 'is Tyndale.' 'But Tyndale!' said I, 'Fortunate be our meeting.' Then Tyndale, 'Sir, I have been exceedingly desirous to speak with you.' 'And I with you; what is your mind?' 'Sir,' said he, 'I am informed that the King's Grace taketh great displeasure with me for putting forth of certain books, which I lately made in these parts; but specially for the book named *The Practice of Prelates;* whereof I have no little marvel, considering that in it I did but warn his Grace of the subtle demeanour of the clergy of his realm towards his person, and of the shameful abusions by

them practised, not a little threatening the displeasure [grief] of his Grace and weal of his realm: in which doing I showed and declared the heart of a true subject, which sought the safeguard of his royal person and weal of his commons, to the intent that his Grace, thereof warned, might in due time prepare his remedies against their subtle dreams. *If for my pains therein taken, if for my poverty, if for mine exile out of my natural country, and bitter absence from my friends, if for my hunger, my thirst, my cold, the great danger wherewith I am everywhere compassed, and finally if for innumerable other hard and sharp fightings which I endure, not yet feeling their asperity, by reason I hoped with my labours to do honour to God, true service to my prince, and pleasure to his commons; how is it that his Grace, this considering, may either by himself think, or by the persuasions of others be brought to think, that in this doing I should not show a pure mind, a true and incorrupt zeal and affection to his Grace?* Was there in me any such mind, when I warned his Grace to beware of his cardinal, whose iniquity he shortly after approved [*i.e.*, proved, discovered] according to my writing? Doth this deserve hatred? Again, may his Grace, being a Christian prince, be so unkind to God, which hath commanded His Word to be spread throughout the world, to give more faith to wicked persuasions of men, which, presuming above God's wisdom, and contrary to that which Christ expressly commandeth in His testament, dare say that it is not lawful for the people to have the same in a tongue that they understand; because the purity thereof should open men's eyes to see their wickedness? Is there more danger in the King's subjects than in the subjects of all other princes, which in every of their tongues have the same, under privilege of their sufferance [sovereigns?]. As I now am, very death were more pleasant to me than life, considering man's nature to be such as can bear no truth.'

"Thus, after a long conversation had between us, for my part making answer as my wit would serve me, which were too long to write, I assayed him with gentle persuasions, to know

whether he would come into England; ascertaining him that means should be made, if he thereto were minded, without his peril or danger, that he might so do; and that what surety he would devise for the same purpose, should, by labour of friends, be obtained of your Majesty. But to this he answered, that he neither would nor durst come into England, albeit your Grace would promise him never so much surety; fearing lest, as he hath before written, your promise made should shortly be broken, by the persuasion of the clergy, which would affirm that promises made with heretics ought not to be kept.

"After this, he told me how he had finished a work against my Lord Chancellor's book, and would not put it in print till such time as your Grace had seen it; because he apperceiveth your displeasure towards him, for hasty putting forth of his other work, and because it should appear that he is not of so obstinate mind as he thinks he is reported to your Grace. This is the substance of his conversation had with me, which as he spake I have written to your Grace, word for word, as near as I could by any possible means bring to remembrance. My trust therefore is, that your Grace will not but take my labours in the best part, I thought necessary to be written unto your Grace. After these words, he then, being something fearful of me, lest I would have pursued him, and drawing also towards night, he took his leave of me, and departed from the town, and I toward the town, saying, 'I should shortly, peradventure, see him again, or if not, hear from him.' Howbeit I suppose he afterward returned to the town by another way; for there is no likelihood that he should lodge without the town. Hasty to pursue him I was not, because I had some likelihood to speak shortly again with him; and in pursuing him I might perchance have failed of my purpose, and put myself in danger.

"To declare to your majesty what, in my poor judgment, I think of the man, I ascertain [assure] your Grace, I have not communed with a man—"[1]

[1] Cotton MSS., *Titus*, B. 1.

Here, however, the copy of the despatch abruptly terminates in the very climax of its interest; and, as it is unlikely that the transcriber would have omitted the sequel if it had been preserved, the suspicion irresistibly arises that the indignant monarch to whom it was addressed, unable to control his patience any longer, had vented his anger upon the honest document which might have saved his reign from one of its foulest blots; just as the besotted Jewish king cut in pieces the faithful warning of the prophet. Vaughan, in his zeal, had travelled beyond his commission. Receiving his instructions personally from Cromwell, his friend and patron, he had assumed that the wishes of the King were identical with those of the minister, and little suspected that the attempt to induce Tyndale to return to England was simply a part of Cromwell's policy, which the King had been half persuaded to tolerate, but of the expediency of which he was by no means convinced.

And since Cromwell had conceived this project, circumstances had occurred which were certain to revive all Henry's prejudices against Tyndale. It is obvious from the date of Vaughan's first despatch (Jan. 26) that he must have received his instructions and must have left England some time before the close of 1530, probably not later than the commencement of December of that year.[1] But at that time Tyndale's *Practice of Prelates* had not yet reached England, as we believe; and when that work did come to be perused by Henry and Cromwell, then it was inevitable that a change should take place in their feelings towards the writer. If Tyndale had propitiated Cromwell's favour by advocating in *The Obedience* the very policy which he wished to inaugurate in England, he had certainly given mortal offence to Henry in *The Practice of Prelates* by denouncing the

[1] He had not only travelled to Bergen from London, but after arriving there and making inquiries, he had written and despatched three letters to Tyndale, and had received a reply, an extremely circuitous operation when Tyndale's actual abode was unknown.

divorce as a flagitious attempt on the part of the clergy to tamper with the law of God. To the King the policy of Cromwell was a matter of inferior importance; he *knew* that he was master of England, and probably felt none of that need for assistance which oppressed his minister: but the matter of the divorce touched him to the quick, and here he could tolerate no opposition. Whatever countenance, therefore, he might have been induced to lend to the design for bringing into England the author of *The Obedience* would be at once withdrawn when *The Practice of Prelates* appeared; and his resentment would naturally be increased by the feeling that he had been seduced by false representation into promising his protection to the man who thus dared to oppose and censure his most cherished wish. Tyndale did not speak without good reason of Henry's "great displeasure for his putting forth of the book named *The Practice of Prelates;*" and the mutilated despatch of the ill-advised envoy may possibly be accepted as no bad indication of the passion which agitated the King on reading the inopportune panegyric of his too honest ambassador.

If the despatch of Vaughan was annoying to Henry, it must have been terribly embarrassing to Cromwell, whose position with his master was seriously compromised by the precipitation of his subordinate. Between Henry and Vaughan, indeed, Cromwell had a very difficult part to play; and the embarrassment of the unhappy secretary is singularly reflected in the draft of his reply, which is interlined, corrected, and re-corrected, and is evidently the work of a man in the utmost bewilderment. It seems a probable conjecture that the despatch as originally penned, though censuring Tyndale's writings with great severity, was not sufficiently bitter to satisfy Henry; and that Cromwell was therefore compelled to alter his language so as to give it additional force. It has even been supposed that the interlineations are by Henry's own pen; but, though the handwriting is not unlike Henry's, careful examination inclines us rather to believe that they

are the work of Cromwell. The letter as it was finally prepared for transmission is here subjoined; the original draft, where it differs, being added at the foot of the page for the information of the reader.[1]

"Stephen Vaughan, I commend me unto you, and have received your letters [*i.e.*, letter] dated at Antwerp the eighteenth day of April, with also that part of Tyndale's book sewed and inclosed in leather, which ye with your letters directed to the King's Highness, after the receipt whereof I did repair unto the court, and there presented the same unto his Royal Majesty, who made me answer for that time that his Highness at opportune leisure should visit [inspect] oversee and read the contents as well of your letters as also the said book. And at my next repair thither it pleased his Highness to call for me, declaring unto me as well the contents of your letters, as also much of the matter contained in the said book of Tyndale.

"And albeit that I might well perceive that his Majesty was right well pleased, and right acceptably considered your diligence and pains taken in the writing and sending of the said book, as also in the persuading and exhorting of Tyndale to repair into this realm: **yet his Highness nothing liked the said book, being filled with seditious, slanderous lies, and fantastical opinions, showing therein neither learning nor truth: and further communing with his Grace I might well conceive that he thought that ye bare much affection towards the said Tyndale*, whom in his manners and knowledge in worldly things ye undoubtedly in your letters do much allow and commend; whose works being replete with so abominable slanders and lies, imagined and only feigned to infect the people, doth [do] declare him both to lack grace, virtue, learning, discretion, and all other good qualities, nothing else pretending in all his works but to seduce, deceive, and sow sedition among the people of this realm.*[2]

[1] Cotton MSS., *Galba*, B. x.

[2] Such, so far as I can make it out, I believe to be the final form of the despatch;

† "The King's Highness, therefore, hath commanded me to advertise you that ye should desist and leave any further to persuade or attempt the said Tyndale to come into this realm; alleging that he, perceiving the malicious, perverse, uncharitable, and indurate mind of the said Tyndale is in manner without hope of reconciliation in him, and is very joyous to have his realm destitute of such a person[1] † than that he should return into the same, there to manifest his errors and seditious opinions, which (being out of the realm by his most uncharitable, venomous, and pestilent book, crafty and false persuasions) he hath partly done already. For his Highness right prudently considereth that if he were present, by all likelihood he would shortly (which God defend) do as much as in him were to infect and corrupt the whole realm, to the great inquietation and hurt of the commonwealth of the same.

"Wherefore, Stephen, I heartily pray you in all your doing, providing, and writing to the King's Highness, ye do justly, truly, and unfeignedly, * without dissimulation show yourself

but the erasures are so numerous that it is difficult to decide what was at last permitted to remain. In the original draft the passage within the asterisks ran thus: ".... in the accomplishment of his high pleasure and commandment. Yet I might conjecture by the further declaration of his Highness' pleasure, which said unto me that he thought that by your writing it manifestly appeared how much affection and zeal ye do bear towards the said Tyndale, whom in his manners, modesty, and simplicity ye undoubtedly do much allow and commend. Then his works being so replete with lies and most abominable slanders imagined and feigned to infect and intoxicate the people may to indifferent judgment declareth [declare] him [show unprejudiced persons what sort of man he is]. For the which your favour supposed to be borne to the said Tyndale (who assuredly showeth himself in my opinion rather to be replete with venomous envy, rancour, and malice than with any good learning, virtue or discretion) hath put the King's Highness in suspicion of you, considering that ye should [*i. e.*, do] in such wise lean unto and favour the evil doctrine of so perverse and malicious a person, and so much praise him who nothing goeth about or pretendeth but only to seduce, deceive, and disquiet the people and commonwealth of this realm."

[1] For the passage enclosed between †† the original draft read thus: "Whose coming into England the King's Highness can right well forbear, and hath commanded me expressly to write unto you that ye should desist and leave any further to persuade or attempt him thereunto; alleging that His Majesty, so evidently perceiving the malicious, perverse, uncharitable mind and disposition of the said Tyndale is rather very glad that he is out of his realm than that, etc.," as above.

his true, loving, and obedient subject, bearing no manner, favour, love, or affection to the said *Tyndale*,[1] *ne to his work in any manner of wise, but utterly contemn and abhor the same, assuring you that in so doing ye shall not only cause the King's Royal Majesty, whose goodness at this time is so benignly and graciously minded towards you (as by your good diligence and industry to be used to serve his Highness, and eschewing and avoiding to favour and allow the said *Tyndale*, his erroneous works and opinions) so to set you forwards as all your lovers and friends shall have great consolation of the same; and by the contrary doing ye shall acquire the indignation of God, displeasure of your sovereign lord, and by the same cause your good friends, which have been ever glad, prone, and ready to bring you into his gracious favours, to lament and sorrow that their suit in that behalf should be frustrate and not to take effect according to their good intent and purpose.[2] Having, therefore, firm trust that for the love ye owe to yourself and your friends, ye will beware and eschew to enter into any opinions whereby any slander, dishonesty, danger, or suspicion might ensue towards you, whereof I promise you I would be as sorry as your natural father.

"As touching *Fryth*, mentioned in your said letter, the King's Highness hearing tell of his towardness in good letters and learning, doth much lament that he should in such wise as he doth, set forth, shew and apply his learning and doctrine in the semination and sowing such evil seed of damnable and detestable heresies, maintaining, bolstering, and advancing the venomous and pestiferous works, erroneous and seditious opinions of the said *Tyndale* and other . . . . Wherein his Highness, like a most virtuous and benign prince having charge of his people and subjects, being very sorry

[1] This specific clause was inserted instead of the original, which said more generally, "Show yourself to be no fautor unto the said Tyndale."

[2] This passage also has been changed from the original, but as the changes had no reference to Tyndale we forbear to transcribe them.

to hear tell that any of the same should in such wise run headlong and digress from the laws of Almighty God and wholesome doctrine of holy fathers, into such damnable heresies and seditious opinions; and being ever inclined, willing, and greatly desirous to foresee and provide for the same; and much desiring the reconciliation of the said Fryth, firmly trusting that he be not so far as yet inrooted in the evil doctrine of the said *Tyndale* and others, but that by the grace of God, loving, charitable, and friendly exhortations and advertisements of good people, he may be called again to the right way; hath willed me to write unto you that ye, therefore, according to his trust and expectation will, with your friendly persuasions, admonitions, and wholesome exhortations, counsel and advise the said Fryth, if ye may conveniently speak with the same, to leave his wilful opinions, and like a good Christian to return unto his native country, where he assuredly shall find the King's Highness most merciful, and benignly, upon his conversion, disposed to accept him to his grace and mercy.

"Wherefore, eftsoons, I exhort you, for the love of God, not only utterly to forsake, leave, and withdraw your affection from the said *Tyndale* and all his sort, but also as much as ye can, politiquely and charitably, to allure all the said Fryth and other such persons being in these parts, which in any wise ye shall know or suppose to be fautors and assistants to the same, from all their erroneous minds and opinions. In which doing ye shall not only highly merit in Almighty God, but also deserve high thanks of the King's Royal Majesty, who will not forget your devoirs and labours in that behalf, so that his Majesty may evidently perceive that ye effectually do intend the same."

The draft of the despatch then concludes with a brief reference to the ordinary topics of official correspondence, which, under other circumstances, might have occupied a more conspicuous place: for the relations between the King and the Emperor were of a somewhat delicate kind; the

proposed divorce and the new policy of Cromwell having not unnaturally created considerable jealousy in the breast of Charles. But to the despatch as actually sent there was appended a most incautious postscript on the part of Cromwell, virtually cancelling all the text of the letter, and showing plainly that it was the minister and not the King who was so bent upon inducing Tyndale to return to England. "Notwithstanding the premises in my letter," wrote the audacious and indiscreet secretary, "if it were possible, by good and wholesome exhortations to reconcile and convert the said *Tyndale* . . . I doubt not but the King's Highness would be *much joyous* of his conversion . . . and if *then he would return into his realm* . . . undoubtedly the King's Majesty refuseth none."[1]

Tyndale had evidently made a profound impression upon Vaughan. Even before the interview at Antwerp, Vaughan had probably shared in that sympathy for the Reformers, which Sir Thomas More represents as not uncommon among the educated classes in England; and when he actually met Tyndale he appreciated at once the noble character of the man with whom he had to deal, and from that moment became his friend. There is really no reason to believe that at first either Henry or Cromwell meant to ensnare Tyndale, and so get him into their power; but, on the contrary, it seems probable that Cromwell hoped to find in him an ally, such as he afterwards had in Latimer, whose eloquence might promote that policy of reformation which he contemplated.

It is quite certain, at all events, that Vaughan was not likely to lend himself to any dishonourable plot for depriving Tyndale of his liberty; for notwithstanding the sharp reprimand administered by Cromwell, he still endeavours to produce in Henry a favourable opinion of the man whom he himself so highly esteemed. Cromwell's angry despatch reached Vaughan at Bergen-op-Zoom on the 18th of May,

[1] The whole passage is quoted again in Vaughan's reply: see p. 308.

and two days afterwards Vaughan replied, giving us a most interesting record of a second interview with Tyndale.[1] After briefly alluding to the peace for two years recently concluded between the Turks and Ferdinand, the growing dissensions between the emperor and his German subjects on religious questions, and the appointment of Mary, Queen of Hungary, as Regent of the Low Countries, in the room of the deceased Lady Margaret, he proceeds to what is of more immediate interest to us:—

"As touching a young man being in these parts named *Fryth*, of whom I lately advertised your Majesty, by my former letters [letter], and whom your Royal Majesty giveth me in commandment, with friendly persuasions, admonitions, and wholesome counsels to advertise to leave his wilful opinions and errors, and to return into his native country, I shall not fail, according unto your most gracious commandment, to endeavour, to the utmost of my power, to persuade him accordingly, so soon as my chance shall be to meet with him. Howbeit I am informed that he is very lately married in Holland, and there dwelleth, but in what place I cannot tell. This marriage may, by chance, hinder my persuasions. I suppose him to have been thereunto driven through poverty, which is to be pitied, his qualities considered.

"I have again been in hand to persuade *Tyndale;* and to draw him the rather to favour my persuasions, and not to think the same feigned, I showed him a clause contained in Master Cromwell's letter, containing these words following:— 'And notwithstanding other the premises in this my letter contained, if it were possible, by good and wholesome exhortations, to reconcile and convert the said *Tyndale* from the train and affection which he now is in, and to excerpt and take away the opinions and fantasies sorely rooted in him, I doubt not but the King's Highness would be much joyous of his conversion and amendment; and so being converted, if then he

[1] *Galba*, B. x. 7 of the new notation: original in the State Paper Office; *Chapter-house Papers.*

would return into his realm, undoubtedly the King's Royal Majesty is so inclined to mercy, pity, and compassion, that he refuseth none which he seeth to submit themselves to the obedience and good order of the world.'

"In these words I thought to be such sweetness and virtue as were able to pierce the hardest heart of the world; and as I thought, so it came to pass. For after sight thereof I perceived the man to be exceedingly altered, and to take the same very near unto his heart, in such wise that water stood in his eyes, and answered, 'What gracious words are these! I assure you,' said he, '*if it would stand with the King's most gracious pleasure to grant only a bare text of the Scripture to be put forth among his people, like as is put forth among the subjects of the Emperor in these parts, and of other Christian princes, be it of the translation of what person soever shall please his Majesty, I shall immediately make faithful promise never to write more, nor abide two days in these parts after the same; but immediately to repair into his realm, and there most humbly submit myself at the feet of his Royal Majesty, offering my body to suffer what pain or torture, yea, what death his Grace will, so that this be obtained.* And till that time I will abide the asperity of all chances, whatsoever shall come, and endure my life in as much pains as it is able to bear and suffer. And as concerning my reconciliation, his Grace may be assured that, whatsoever I have said or written in all my life against the honour of God's Word, and [it be][1] so proved, the same shall I before his Majesty and all the world [utterly] renounce and forsake, and with most humble and meek mind [embrace] the truth, abhorring all error, sooner at the most gracious and benign [request] of his Royal Majesty (of whose wisdom, prudence, and learning I [hear] so great praise and commendation), than of any other creature living. But if those things which I have written be true, and stand with God's Word, why should his Majesty, having so excellent [gift] of know-

[1] The words enclosed in brackets in this part of the letter are supplied conjecturally to fill up the sense; the edges of the MSS. having been injured by fire.

ledge in the Scriptures, move me to do anything against my conscience?' with many other words which were too long to write.

"Finally, I have some good hope in the man, and would not doubt to bring [him] to some good point, were it that some thing now and then might proceed from your Majesty towards me, whereby the man might take the better comfort of my persuasions. I advertised the same *Tyndale* that he should not put forth the same book, till your most gracious pleasure were known: whereunto he answered, mine advertisement came too late, for he feared lest one that had his copy would put it very shortly in print, which he would let [*i.e.*, prevent] if he could; if not, there is no remedy. I shall stay it as much as I can. As yet it is not come forth, nor will not in a while, by that I perceive. Luther hath lately put forth a work against the Emperor, in the German tongue, which I would cause to be translated into Latin and send it to your Majesty, if I knew your gracious pleasure. In it are many things to be seen."

Though baffled and disappointed, neither Cromwell nor Vaughan was willing to relinquish the attempt to induce Tyndale to return, without a further effort. Writing on the 19th of June, Vaughan records yet one more ineffectual attempt to persuade Tyndale:—

"I cannot come by the book of Luther's [referred to in the previous letter]; there came but one to all this town, and that was gone or I received answer. I have another put forth by Melanchthon in the Latin tongue, which I obtained while I wrote this, and would have sent it you, but the bearer thought it too great. It is entitled, *Confessio fidei exhibita invictissimo Imp. Carolo v. Cæsari, Aug. in Comitiis Augustæ* [a Confession of faith presented to the most mighty Emperor Charles v. at the Assembly at Augsburg]. I would gladly send such things to his Highness; but I am informed he looketh not upon them himself but committeth them to others. I am sorry he so doeth, because I know his high judgment in

learning to be such as might safely without danger approve men's opinions by reading thereof . . . I was never more desirous to speak with you than now, wherefore I pray you help me to come home. *I have spoken with Tyndale*, and shewed him as you wrote me the King's royal pleasure was, but I find him always singing one note [*i.e.*, always alleging the same objections to returning into England]. You wrote that the answer which he made to the Chancellor was unclerkly done: and so seem all his works to eloquent men, because he useth so rude and simple style, nothing liking any vain praise and commendation. If the King's royal pleasure had been to have looked thereupon, he should then have better judged it than upon the sight of another man. The prophets Esay and Jonas are put forth in the English tongue [one translated by George Joye from the Vulgate, the other by Tyndale from the Hebrew], and [it] passeth any man's power to stop them from coming forth."[1]

Here, for a time, the correspondence ceases. Vaughan seems to have obtained that permission to return home which he so urgently requested, and it was not till the month of November that he resumed his functions as envoy in Antwerp; and he does not appear to have ever re-opened personal communications with the illustrious exile whom he so much admired. And the occurrences of the summer of 1531 in England were of such a nature as to confirm all Tyndale's fears, and to prove conclusively how well-founded had been his disinclination to relinquish his comparative safety in Antwerp and to face the dangers and uncertainties which awaited him in England, where, for a brief season, the enemies of the Reformation seemed to be expending their utmost violence. The commencement of the year, indeed, had been signalised by Cromwell's first great achievement in the humiliation of the clergy. Convocation, after long and fierce debates, had not only been compelled to pay the King an

[1] State Paper Office: Miscellaneous Letters, Second Series; printed by Sir Henry Ellis in his collection of *Original Letters*.

enormous fine, as the price of their exemption from the penalties of the Statute of *Præmunire*, which they had incurred by acknowledging Wolsey's legatine authority; but, more bitter humiliation still, they had also been forced to recognise Henry to be "the supreme head of the clergy and Church of England," thereby virtually annulling their oath of supreme allegiance to the pope.[1] By way of compensating themselves for this degradation, Convocation proceeded to exhibit extreme rigour in prosecuting heretics; and, probably from reasons of policy, no attempt was made by Henry or Cromwell to restrain them.

William Tracy, of Toddington in Gloucestershire, a former friend of Tyndale, conspicuous for his piety and his careful study of the works of the Fathers, and especially St. Augustine, had died in 1530, and his will was found to contain what was deemed gross heresy. He denied the efficacy of works to procure salvation, impugned the mediation of saints, and directed that no part of his goods should be bestowed to purchase prayers for the benefit of his soul.[2] His testament had made such an impression that copies of it had been circulated; and as early as February 25th, 1531, the subject was brought before Convocation, and the will was condemned as "proud, scandalous, contradictory, impious, and heretical;"[3] and it was decreed that, unless satisfactory reasons could be alleged in explanation, he should be declared a heretic, and his body should be exhumed and cast out of consecrated ground,—a sentence which was subsequently officially pronounced, and carried into execution with circumstances of additional atrocity by that same Dr. Parker, Chancellor of Worcester, who, ten years before, had summoned Tyndale before him and rated him like a dog.[4]

Proceedings were instituted at the same time against

[1] See Demaus' *Latimer*, pp. 108, etc.

[2] Tyndale's *Expositions*, p. 272.

[3] *Fastosum, scandalosum, sibi repugnans, impiumque, et hereticum.*" Wilkins' *Concilia*, Vol. III. p. 725.

[4] See Demaus' *Latimer*, p. 111. Tyndale's *Works*, Vol. I. p. 395.

Latimer, Bilney, and Crome, all Cambridge men, and well known to Tyndale; and the last of these, a conspicuous reforming preacher in London, was compelled to abjure. On the last day of March, another distinguished Cambridge scholar, John Lambert or Nicholson, a convert of Bilney, was brought before Convocation. In him Tyndale must have felt a special interest, for he had been "chaplain and preacher to the English House at Antwerp" for upwards of a year, and had been betrayed by Barlowe, the very brother of Greenwich, as some suppose, who had joined Tyndale at Worms after the departure of Roye.[1] These proceedings, which were all reported and probably exaggerated at Antwerp, were certainly not calculated to induce Tyndale to comply with Vaughan's invitation; they were in all likelihood known to Tyndale before his interview with the envoy, April 17, and amply justified his declaration that "he neither would nor durst come into England, albeit the King would promise him never so much surety, fearing lest his promise made should shortly be broken by the persuasion of the clergy, which would affirm that promises made with heretics ought not to be kept."

As the summer passed on, the prospect in England grew every day darker and more discouraging. Bilney, whom Tyndale had unquestionably known at Cambridge, and from whom he had perhaps imbibed his first love for the doctrines of the Reformers, was apprehended and burnt at Norwich in August.[2]

[1] Foxe, Vol. v. p. 181; Wilkins, Vol. III. p. 746. Tyndale calls this "brother of Greenwich" *Jerome*. Rinck's letter, given on page 162, mentions Jerome Barlowe as one of the associates of Tyndale; and it seems, therefore, a fair conclusion that Jerome and Jerome Barlowe were the same person. This person was, according to Tyndale, the author of a poem against the Mass; and Barlowe, Bishop of Bath, a martyr in Mary's reign, acknowledged having written against the Mass. The bishop's name, however, was *William;* but possibly William Barlowe was the correct name, and Jerome only an assumed monastic name. Now Sir Thomas More (*Confutation*, p. 656) speaks of William Barlowe as "long conversant in Germany," but before 1532 changing his opinions. Was not this therefore the informant against Lambert? and if so, how deeply must Tyndale have been interested!

[2] See Demaus' *Latimer*, p. 221. A friendly critic in the *Contemporary Review* asks my authority for fixing August 19 as the date of Bilney's execution. Tunstal's

A few weeks later, Bayfield, another friend of Tyndale, shared the same fate; one who, according to Foxe, had been converted to the cause of the Reformation by the study of Tyndale's works, and who, according to the same authority, was "beneficial to Master Tyndale and Master Fryth, for he brought substance with him, and was their own hand, and sold all their works."[1] After two most successful importations of the works of Tyndale and the Continental Reformers, he had been seized, when in possession of a third cargo, and being a relapsed heretic, he was condemned, degraded, and burnt.

Bayfield was resolute, and could not be induced to make any confession incriminating his associates abroad; but the next person who fell into the hands of Sir Thomas More proved more pliable, notwithstanding the favourable omen of his name. George Constans or Constantine, who had been for years on the Continent, one of those whom Rinck had associated in his letter with Tyndale, Roye, and Jerome, and who had been an active agent in the circulation of Tyndale's works, was seized and carried before the Chancellor, then in the height of that fierce career of persecution so totally incongruous with his own gentle character and the tenor of his early opinions. Sir Thomas was anxious if possible to ascertain from whom Tyndale and others received assistance; and he determined to work upon Constantine's fears. The unfortunate man was put in irons, "tied by the leg with a chain like a wild beast," according to Vaughan; and, overcome with terror, he confessed at least part of what Sir Thomas More wished to learn. He revealed the name of the merchant who received the prohibited books, "and the marks of the fardels,"[2] so that they were

Register, I am aware, assigns August 26, but this is in a marginal note, and I have repeatedly seen reason to distrust marginal notes. Foxe, without mentioning any day of the month, says the execution took place on Saturday, being St. Magnus' Day: now in 1531, St. Magnus' Day (August 19) fell on a Saturday. Such a coincidence seems to me always preferable to a bald statement: moreover, Collier and Holinshed also give the 19th.

[1] Foxe, Vol. IV. p. 681. Foxe's account of Bayfield's earlier career is confused and incredible.

[2] Sir Thomas More's *Confutation* of Tyndale's *Answer*, fol. 346.

subsequently seized and burned. He made statements also reflecting upon Vaughan, greatly to the distress of the honest envoy, as we shall subsequently see. It does not appear that he made any disclosures concerning Tyndale; fortunately, however, he contrived to escape from durance, and without loss of time he returned to Antwerp, which he reached in the beginning of December.

Such are a few of the occurrences of the year 1531; in all which intimate friends and associates of Tyndale were concerned, and they were certainly not at all reassuring. Nothing but bonds and death seemed to await him if he returned to England; and though he was ready, with God's help, to face any danger when duty called him, he saw no reason for voluntarily courting the fiery doom of Bilney and Bayfield. On the Continent, in the meantime, he was safe; there were misunderstandings between the Emperor and the King of England, and complaints that might even involve the two nations in hostilities; and while this state of things lasted, there was no likelihood that Charles would give up Tyndale to gratify Henry's desire for vengeance. That he remained during the whole year at Antwerp cannot with any certainty be affirmed: but as he was there in the months of May and June, when Vaughan had interviews with him, it seems in no way improbable that he spent the greater part of the year there. He was still diligently prosecuting his noble work; and this year he gave to the world the last contribution to the translation of Holy Scripture which was published in his lifetime,—the translation of the prophet Jonah.

The history of this little work is surrounded with the same element of romantic interest which invests the first issue of the New Testament. Although the book was denounced by name at Paul's Cross by Stokesley, as the New Testament had been by Stokesley's predecessor in the See; although Vaughan alludes to it, and Sir Thomas More in his *Confutation* had with facetious violence declared that "Jonas was never so swallowed up with the whale as by the

delight of that book a man's soul may be so swallowed up by the devil that he shall never have the grace to get out again;" yet the work had at a very early period become extremely scarce, and, in fact, had so totally disappeared that many writers had begun to deny its existence. The Prologue to the translation had, indeed, been repeatedly reprinted; but the translation itself had apparently become so rare that in the Bible of 1537, edited by John Rogers, to whom Tyndale is said to have given his manuscripts before his martyrdom, Coverdale's translation of Jonah is printed; Rogers being, it is presumed, unable to procure a copy of Tyndale's. And the last editor of Tyndale's works has even gone so far as to maintain that Tyndale had merely written the Prologue, and that there never was any translation of the book of the prophet Jonah.[1]

In 1861, however, Lord Arthur Hervey, then Rector of Ickworth, found in an old volume, which had been in the possession of his family for upwards of two centuries, a copy of the long-lost treatise, containing both the Prologue and the translation, thus setting at rest the question which had so long perplexed biographers. It is a little tract of four-and-twenty leaves, with neither date, nor place, nor name of printer annexed: the author of the work being indicated, as in the Pentateuch, by the simple phrase, "W. T. unto the Christian reader," prefixed to the Prologue. "The type," says Mr. Fry, who has reproduced the book in facsimile, "is the same as that used by Martin Lempereur in the Bible in French, printed at Antwerp in 1530;" and as Tyndale was at Antwerp in 1531, and as he employed Lempereur to print for him, there seems no reasonable doubt that the Jonah issued from the same press from which Tyndale's revised New Testament proceeded in 1534.[2]

The Prologue is of course directed against the great errors of the day; but the reader seeks in vain for anything to

[1] Professor Walter; Parker Society edition of Tyndale's *Works*.

[2] See Mr. Fry's Facsimile, Introductory Remarks.

justify the fierce condemnation of Sir Thomas More. All the errors and abuses that prevailed had sprung, in Tyndale's view, from one great cause; Scripture had been depraved by allegorical interpretations, and the laity were not permitted to search and ascertain for themselves its true meaning.

"As the envious Philistines," says he, repeating one of the old illustrations of Erasmus' *Enchiridion*, "stopped the wells of Abraham, and filled them up with earth, to put the memorial [recollection of them] out of mind, to the intent that they might challenge the ground; even so the fleshly-minded hypocrites stop up the veins of life which are in the Scripture, with the earth of their traditions, false similitudes, and lying allegories; and that of like zeal, to make the Scripture their own possession and merchandise, and so shut up the kingdom of heaven, which is God's Word; neither entering in themselves, nor suffering them that would."

They had corrupted all parts of Holy Scripture, "the Law, the Gospel, and the stories which it contained." "When the hypocrites come to the Law, they put glosses to, and make no more of it, than of a worldly law, which is satisfied with the outward work, and which a Turk may also fulfil . . . . And when they come to the Gospel, there they mingle their leaven and say, 'God now receiveth us no more to mercy, but of mercy receiveth us to penance,' that is to wit, holy deeds that make them fat bellies and us their captives both in soul and body. And yet they feign their idol the pope so merciful, that if thou make a little money glitter in his Balaam's eyes, there is neither penance nor purgatory nor any fasting at all, but to flee to heaven as swift as a thought and at the twinkling of an eye. And the lives, stories, and gests [deeds] of men which are contained in the Bible, they read as things no more pertaining unto them than a tale of Robin Hood, and as things they wot not whereto they serve, save to feign false descant and juggling allegories, to establish their kingdom withal. And one the chiefest and fleshliest study they have, is to magnify the *saints* above measure and above the truth,

and with their poetry to make them greater than ever God made them. And if they find any infirmity or sin ascribed unto the saints, that they excuse with all diligence, diminishing the glory of the mercy of God, and robbing sinners of all their comfort, and think thereby to flatter the saints, and to obtain their favour, and to make special advocates of them, even as a man would obtain the favour of worldly tyrants: as they also feign the saints much more cruel than ever was any heathen man, and more wreakful and vengeable than the poets feign their gods or their furies that torment the souls in hell, if their evens be not fasted, and their images visited and saluted with a *Pater noster* (which prayer only our lips be acquainted with, our hearts understanding it none at all), and worshipped with a candle and the offering of our devotion, in the place which they have chosen to hear the supplications and meek petitions of their clients therein." [1]

There was, in the circumstances of the age, an obvious reason for selecting the book of Jonah as peculiarly likely to benefit his countrymen. To Tyndale it appeared that the position of Nineveh when visited by the preacher of repentance was strictly analogous to that of his own country, long sunk in ignorance, and now summoned to hear and obey the teaching of the Gospel; the only difference being that the Ninevites had at once obeyed the preacher's invitation, while the authorities in England seemed determined to offer the most bitter opposition. Most earnestly, therefore, did he entreat his countrymen to repent, and so escape those penalties which the indignation of God was sure to inflict upon the impenitent.

"Since the world began wheresoever repentance was offered and not received, there God took cruel vengeance immediately; as ye see in the flood of Noah, in the overthrowing of Sodom and Gomorrah and all the country about; and as ye see of Egypt, of the Amorites, Canaanites, and afterwards of the very Israelites; and then at the last of the Jews too, and of

[1] From Mr. Fry's Facsimile.

the Assyrians and Babylonians, and so throughout all the empires of the world.

"Gildas preached repentance unto the old Britons that inhabited England: they repented not, and therefore God sent in their enemies upon them on every side and destroyed them up, and gave the land unto other nations. And great vengeance hath been taken in that land for sin since that time. Wickliffe preached repentance unto our fathers not long since: they repented not, for their hearts were indurate and their eyes blinded with their own pope-holy righteousness wherewith they had made their souls gay against [for] the receiving again of the wicked spirit that bringeth seven worse than himself with him, and maketh the latter end worse than the beginning; for in open sins there is hope of repentance, but in holy hypocrisy none at all. But what followed? They slew their true and right king [Richard II.] and set up three wrong kings a-row [Henry IV., V., VI.], under which all the noble blood was slain and half the commons thereto, what in France, and what with their own sword, in fighting among themselves for the crown, and the cities and towns decayed, and the land [was] brought half into a wilderness in respect of that it was before.

"And now Christ to preach repentance is risen yet once again out of His sepulchre, in which the pope had buried Him and kept Him down with his pillars[1] and poleaxes and all disguisings of hypocrisy, with guile, wiles, and falsehood, and with the sword of all princes which he had blinded with his false merchandise. And as I doubt not of the ensamples that are past, so am I sure that great wrath will follow, except repentance turn it back again and cease it."[2]

Tyndale still continued to prosecute his translation of the Old Testament, but except a few detached fragments, no more of his work was given to the world during his lifetime. For another great idea had taken possession of his mind, and

[1] Part of the insignia borne before the pope and his legates.

[2] From Fry's Facsimile.

he was devoting all his energy to its accomplishment. "It is not enough," he said, "to have translated, though it were the whole Scripture, into the vulgar and common tongue, except we also bring again the light to understand it by, and expel that dark cloud which the hypocrites have spread over the face of the Scripture, to blind the right sense and true meaning thereof."[1] With this purpose in view he had written his *Prologue to Jonah;* and in prosecution of the same purpose he issued in September of this same year an *Exposition of the First Epistle of Saint John;* and, indeed, the greater part of the years 1531 and 1532 was engrossed with the accomplishment of this new task. These expository works possess very considerable merit, mainly, however, of a polemical kind; but, in spite of their constant clearness and their occasional eloquence, one cannot help regretting that Tyndale was thus withdrawn from his true function of a translator, in which he stands unrivalled, to labours far less congenial to his capacity. Upwards of two years were thus entirely, or almost entirely, lost to the revision of his New Testament, which he had long before promised, and which the Dutch printers were so earnestly pressing upon him; and the prosecution of his labours on the Old Testament must have been for a time almost completely arrested.

The Exposition of Saint John's Epistle is, probably, the least striking of all Tyndale's works to a modern reader. The constant interruption to the continuity of the subject was unfavourable to that earnest and impetuous eloquence which forms the chief charm in his other writings: and while no one has laid down more clearly than Tyndale the true principle of sound Scriptural interpretation, he has not carried his principle into execution, in such a manner as to excite the interest of readers accustomed to the elaborate expositions of modern commentators. It is, accordingly, not those passages that would in strictness of speech be styled expository which arrest our attention; but rather those in which Tyndale

[1] Prologue to *Exposition of I John.*

breaks out afresh on the old themes on which he was never tired of descanting, and in which his reader never loses his interest. On these the old fire burns as brightly as ever, and his hand deals out as heavy blows on those who were the unrelenting opponents of all attempts to enlighten and reform the Church.

In a single sentence, he lays down with admirable succinctness the whole scope and purport of the Reformation which he advocated: "We restore the Scripture unto her right understanding [meaning] from your glosses, and we deliver the sacraments and ceremonies unto their right use from your abuse."

Sir Thomas More did not, of course, omit, in his *Confutation*, to censure Tyndale's *Exposition*, which he declares to have been "in such wise expounded that I dare say that blessed apostle [John], rather than his holy words were in such a sense believed of all Christian people, had lever [rather] his epistle had never been put in writing." And Tyndale had, in truth, given fresh provocation to his old adversary by repeating once more, in the most offensive manner, the imputation against his honesty, which he had already advanced in his *Answer*. "Love not the world," the Apostle said, "nor the things that are in the world: if a man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him;" and Tyndale, in his *Exposition*, thus comments upon these words of St. John:—

"The love of the world quencheth the love of God; Balaam, for the love of the world, closed his eyes at the clear light which he well saw. For love of the world the old Pharisees blasphemed the Holy Ghost, and persecuted the manifest truth, which they could not improve [disprove]. For love of the world many are this day fallen away; and many which stood on the truth's side, and defended it awhile, for love of the world have gotten them unto the contrary part, and are become the Antichrist of Rome's Mamelukes, and are waxen the most wicked enemies unto the truth and most cruel against it. They know the truth, but they love the world: and when they espied that the truth could not stand with the honours which they sought in the world, they hated it deadly, and both wittingly and willingly persecuted it, sinning against the Holy

Ghost: which sin shall not escape here unpunished; as it shall not be without damnation in the world to come; but shall have an end here with confusion and shame, as had Judas Iscariot, the traitor.

"And if pride, covetousness, and lechery be the world, as St. John saith, 'all that is in the world, as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of good, are not of the Father, but of the world,' then turn your eyes unto the spiritualty, unto the Roman bishop, cardinals, bishops, abbots, and all other prelates, and see whether such dignities be not the world, and whether the way to them be not also the world! To get the old abbot's treasure, I think it be the readiest way to be the new. How few come by promotion except they buy it, or serve long for it, or both? To be skilled in war, and in polling to maintain war and lusts, and to be a good ambassador, is the only way to a bishopric; or to pay truly for it. See whether pluralities, unions [holding of many benefices], tot quots, and changing the less benefice and bishoprick for the greater (for the contrary change, I trow, was never seen), may be without covetousness and pride. And then, if such things be the world, and the world not of God, how is our spiritualty of God? If pride be seeking of glory, and they that seek glory cannot believe, how can our spiritualty believe in Christ? If covetousness turn men from the faith, how are our spiritualty in the faith? If Christ, when the devil proffered Him the kingdoms of the world and the glory thereof, refused them, as things impossible to stand with His kingdom, which is not of the world; of whom are our spiritualty, which have received them? If covetousness be a traitor, and taught Judas to sell his Master, how should he not in so long time teach our spiritualty the same craft? . . . The rich persecute the true believers. The rich will never stand forth openly for the Word of God. If of ten thousand there spring one Nicodemus, it is a great thing."

All the other topics which Tyndale had so often treated in his former works are again introduced, and discussed, if not with any fresh arguments, at least with unabated earnestness. A single specimen will show that his hand had lost none of its cunning:—

"To speak of worshipping of saints, and praying unto them, and of that we make them our advocates well nigh above Christ, or altogether [above Christ], though it require a long disputation, yet it is as bright as the day to all that know the truth; how that our fasting of their evens, and keeping their holy days, going bare-foot, sticking up of candles in the bright day, in the worshipping of them, to obtain their favour, our giving them so costly jewels, offering into their boxes, clothing their images, shoeing them with silver shoes with an ouch of crystal in the midst, to stroke the lips and eyes of the ignorant, as a man would stroke young children's heads to entice them and bring them in, and rock them

asleep in ignorance, are, with all like service, plain idolatry, that is, in English, image-service. For the saints are spirits, and can have no delectation in bodily things. And because those bodily deeds can be no service unto the spiritual saints, and we do them not to be a service to ourselves or our neighbours, we serve the work and the false imagination of our fleshly wit, after the doctrine of man, and not of God, and are image-servants. And this is it that Paul calleth *servire elementis mundi* [to serve the elements of the world], to be in captivity under dumb ceremonies and vain traditions of men's doctrine, and to do the work for the work itself; as though God delighted therein, for the deed itself, without all other respect [without regard to anything else].

"But and [if] ye will know the true worshipping of saints, hearken unto Paul, where he saith, 'Ye shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life unto my glory (or worship), against the day of Jesus Christ, that I have not run nor laboured in vain.' That is to wete, the worship which all true saints now seek, and the worship that all the true messengers of God seek this day, or ever shall seek, is to draw all to Christ with preaching the true Word of God, and with the ensample of pure living fashioned thereafter. Will ye therefore worship saints truly? Then ask what they preached, and believe their doctrine; and as they followed that doctrine, so conform your living like unto theirs: and that shall be unto their high worship in the coming again of Christ (when all men's deeds shall appear, and every man shall be judged, and receive his reward, according unto his deeds), how that they not only, while they here lived, but also after their death, with the ensample of their doctrine and living, left behind in writing and other memorials, [served?] unto the ensample of them that should follow them unto Christ, that were born five hundred, yea, a thousand years after their death. This was their worship in the spirit at the beginning, as they were spirits; and lights were sticked before their memorials at the beginning, to be a ceremony to put us in remembrance that we so praised the saints, and boasted their livings, that we followed their ensamples in our deeds; as Christ saith, 'Let your light so shine before men that they see your good works, and glorify your Father that is in heaven.' For preaching of the doctrine, which is light, hath but small effect to move the heart, if the ensample of living do disagree.

"And that we worship saints for fear, lest they should be displeased and angry with us, and plague us or hurt us, (as who is not afraid of St. Laurence? who dare deny St. Anthony a fleece of wool, for fear of his terrible fire, or lest he send the pox among our sheep?) is heathen image-service, and clean against the first commandment, which is, 'Hear, Israel, the Lord thy God is one God.' Now God in the Hebrew is called *El*, or *Elohim* in the plural number, *i.e.*, *strength or might*. So that the commandment is, Hear, Israel, He that is thy power and might, thy sword and shield, is but One; that is, there is none of might to help or hurt thee, save One, which is altogether thine, and at thy commandment, if thou

wilt hear His voice. And all other might in the world is borrowed of Him: and He will lend no might against thee contrary to His promises. Keep therefore His commandments, and He shall keep thee: and if thou have broken them, and He have lent of His power against thee, repent and come again unto thy profession; and He will return again unto His mercy, and fetch His power home again, which He lent to vex thee, because thou forsookest Him and brakest His commandments. And fear no other creature; for false fear is the cause of all idolatry."

As in the case of most of his other works, almost every copy of the original issue of the Exposition has perished. Only one contemporary copy is known to exist, that in the library of St. Paul's Cathedral; and in it there is nothing to indicate either time or place of publication, the title-page having been destroyed. Sir Thomas More's notice, however, leaves no doubt of the *time*, which, as we shall see, is sufficiently fixed by one of Vaughan's letters; and, as to the *place*, a careful comparison with other books makes it equally certain that the work was printed at Antwerp.[1]

The same ancient copy contains also an Exposition of the Second and Third Epistles of St. John, printed so as to form one continuous whole, and with an index to them all as one book. Evidence both internal and external has been adduced against the authenticity of this Exposition of the two latter Epistles; More, it is alleged, alludes only to the Exposition of the First Epistle; Foxe reprinted only this; Vaughan mentions only this; and there are expressions in the other Expositions which seem quite inconsistent with the opinions repeatedly expressed by Tyndale. On the other hand, Tunstal's *Register* mentions amongst the prohibited books *The Exposition of Tyndale upon the Epistles Canonick of Saint John;*[2] the later Expositions distinctly allude to the preceding Exposition of the First Epistle; and the oldest copy of the work extant contains, as already noted, all three Expositions evidently treated as parts of one book.

[1] On examining the copy in St. Paul's, I observed that there occurs at the end of the Prologue a woodcut, which was subsequently used in an edition of the New Testament printed at Antwerp.

[2] See Religious Tract Society's Foxe; Appendix to Vol. v.

It is true that the later Expositions are very common-place; but there is nothing in the Epistles themselves to suggest any of those topics on which Tyndale was likely to have expatiated with his characteristic boldness and energy. On the whole, therefore, it may be accepted as probable that Tyndale expounded all the three Epistles;[1] and we may fairly consider this work as constituting his chief occupation in Antwerp during the summer of 1531.

But the leisure and security thus enjoyed in Antwerp were very precarious. With such an envoy as Vaughan, he was indeed safe from any violence on the part of England; and the rights and privileges of the great trading city were sufficient to shield him from ordinary dangers: yet he knew too well the sleepless animosity of his enemies, and his own utter helplessness against any unforeseen combination of those who were anxious for his apprehension. His safety was best assured by that obscurity which had so long baffled the ingenuity of his hunters; and he seems accordingly to have left Antwerp about the close of the year, and for some months to have wandered up and down in Germany, with no definite aim, probably, beyond that of throwing his persecutors off the trail; and yet, as we shall see, not even in this nomad condition neglecting his great purpose of providing his countrymen with true Expositions of Holy Scripture.

It was not without good reason that Tyndale left Antwerp at this time. Henry seems, for some cause unknown, to have changed his policy; Vaughan having proved impracticable, a less scrupulous agent was now employed; and the despatches speak no longer of *persuading* Tyndale to return to England under a safe conduct, but of *apprehending* him. Vaughan

[1] Professor Walter refers to the use of *charity* instead of *love*, and to an air of mysticism in certain passages in the later Expositions as conclusive against their authority. I do not wish to dogmatise; but the arguments given above seem to me to render the authenticity, to say the least, highly probable. With these Expositions is also bound up an *Exposition of St. Jude*, which is, however, clearly in *English*, not *Foreign*, Black letter, and was probably written by some one in England, and not till after Tyndale's death.

appears to have been in England during the autumn, probably to receive fresh instructions regarding those mutual complaints which were endangering the peace of England and Germany, and perhaps also to enable Cromwell and Henry to judge whether he was likely to aid them in their further designs upon Tyndale. Vaughan's convictions, however, were too deep to be shaken; and another envoy, Sir Thomas Elyot, a friend of Sir Thomas More, was intrusted with the ignoble task of detecting and apprehending the Translator. Elyot's achievements, however, belong to the following year, and will come before us in due time; the narrative of the present year will close most appropriately with Vaughan's noble protest against the violent persecution that was raging in England.

After a long silence since June (explained by his visit to London) he thus, in November, resumes his correspondence with Cromwell:[1] "I am informed that George Constantine hath of late declared certain things against me before my Lord Chancellor. If it be true, I pray you let me know what things they be. Be you hereof assured, he can declare nothing against me that is truth to hurt me. Peradventure he hath declared that I spake with *Tyndale*. If so he have done, what hath he therein declared that I myself have not signified to the King's Highness? Peradventure he hath also declared that I laboured *Tyndale*, upon the King's safe-conduct, to come into England. This also I have signified to his Highness. What other thing soever he hath declared against me, being true, I care not for it; if otherwise, *veritas liberabit*. I pray you let me have your letters [letter], to know whether you have received my former three letters [all written since his return from England] or otherwise."

A few days later, November 14th, he again writes to Cromwell, sending along with his letter "another book lately put out by William Tyndale, being *An Exposition upon the First Epistle of John*," which he requested the secretary to deliver into the hands of the King. Again adverting to the

[1] *Titus*, B. I. 373: the letter alludes to his recent visit to London.

charges made against him, he protests, "I would to God that the thoughts of my heart towards the honour of his Majesty might be by his Highness seen. Then should he right well apperceive that whatsoever the world, either for malice or fear of themselves, saith or shall report, I am a true and faithful subject of his, and no otherwise, by God's grace, will be, though my death were threatened thereby; yea, be you further assured that no friendship, no promotion, no advancement, no promise, no gifts, finally, no earthly treasures or persuasion can once bow my neck (though to look upon I am but weak) or anything stir my mind and purpose to the contrary."

Most of all, however, he commends to the notice of Henry and Cromwell a book recently published by Barnes, of which he sends a copy for their perusal, characterising it as "such a piece of work as I yet have not seen one like unto it: I think he shall seal it with his blood." With singular lack of caution, he suggests to Cromwell that it would be a good deed "to help that Doctor Barnes might declare the opinions of his book before the King's Majesty." "Men's errors," he continues, "in my poor judgment should from henceforth cease, were it so that it might please the King's Majesty to have that man examined both before his Highness and the world, whereby his Grace should show himself seriously to regard the truth of God's Word, and that his judges were men virtuous, of good living, and of good learning, and indifferent [*i.e.*, impartial]. Thus doing, the matter were soon tried and the people soon brought out of doubt: and what better deed could his Majesty do than this? When any be secretly examined the world murmureth, and hath thereby cause to deem [judge] wrongfully. Behold the signs of the world which be wondrous!"[1]

Bold as these words were, they are completely eclipsed by the honesty and courage of a subsequent letter, written from Antwerp on the 6th of December, the very day when George

[1] State Paper Office: this interesting letter has never been printed.

Constantine arrived there after his escape from prison in England. After acknowledging the receipt of some long-expected despatches from Cromwell, he thus proceeds to defend himself and to declare his opinions as to the state of things in England:—

"And whereas in the same your letters among other things therein contained you signify unto me the taking of George Constantine, and the doubt which your friends putteth, that the said George will accuse me [not] [1] only to be a fautor and adherent to the Lutheran sect, but also to have given help for and towards the setting forth of such books and works as be erroneous and suspect: and therewith cease not, after your accustomed manner, with many friendly, loving, earnest, and discreet exhortations to move, stir, and persuade [me] to be circumspect; and clearly separating and alienating myself from such sects and erroneous opinions, only to apply and endeavour myself truly and unfeignedly to serve the King his Majesty in such things as his Highness hath trustily commended unto me in these parts; promising me thereby the increase of my laud, praise, and commendation, with other things too long to write.

"To these things before rehearsed pleaseth it you benignly to receive mine answer in these words following: If Constantine have accused me to be of the Lutheran sect, a fautor and setter forth of erroneous and suspected works, I do not thereat marvel, for two causes specially. One is, for that my Lord Chancellor, in his examination of the said George and of all other men, as I am credibly informed, being brought before him for cases of heresy, doth deeply inquire to know what may be said of me; and in the examination thereof showeth evident and clear desire in his countenance and haviour to hear something of me whereby an occasion of evil might be fastened against me; which, no doubt, shall soon be espied in the patient whom he examineth, who app[erceiving]

[1] The words in brackets are supplied from conjecture, the MS. being burnt in those places.

his desire in that behalf, and trusting, by accusing of me, to scape and avoid his present danger, of pure frailty and weakness spareth not to accuse the innocent. The other is, for that George, besides the imminent peril and danger in which he was, abiding prisoner in my lord's house, was vehemently stirred and provoked, what with the remembrance of his poor wife remaining here desperate, bewashed with continual tears and pinched with hourly sorrow, sighs, and mourning, and the sharp and bitter threatenings of his poor [state] and condition, likely to be brought into an extreme danger of poverty, [and] more hard than the first, by the success [excess?] of his misery, to accuse whom they had longed for, rather than to be tied by the leg with a cold and [heavy] iron, like a beast—as appeared by the shift he made to undo the same and escape such tortures and punishments. Will not these perils, fears, punishments, make a son forget the father which gat him? and the mother that bare him and fed him with her breasts? If they will, who should [wonder] though he would accuse me, a thousand times less dear unto him than either father or mother, to rid him out of the same?

"Would God it might please the King's Majesty to look unto these kinds of punishment; which, in my poor opinion, threateneth a more hurt to his realm than those that be his ministers to execute the same tortures and punishments do think or conjecture; and by [for] this reason only. It shall constrain his subjects in great number to forsake his realm, and to inhabit strange regions and countries, where they shall not practise a little hurt to the same. Yea, and whereas they think that tortures, punishments, and death shall be a mean to rid the realm of erroneous opinions, and bring men in such fear that they shall not once be so hardy [as] to speak or look: be you assured, and let the King's Grace be thereof advertised of my mouth, that his Highness shall duly approve [discover] that in the end it shall cause the sect to wax greater, and those errors to be more plenteously sowed in his realm than ever afore. For who have so mightily sowed those errors as

those persons which for fear of tortures and death have fled his realm? Shall they not, by driving men out of his realm, make the rownt[1] and company greater in strange countries, and shall not many do more than one or two? Shall not four write where one wrote afore? Counsel you the King's Highness, as his true subject, to look upon this matter, and no more to trust to other men's policies, which threateneth, in mine opinion, the weal of his realm; and let me no longer be blamed nor suspected for my true saying. That [what] I write I know to be true; and daily do see the experience of that I now write, which, between you and me, I have often said and written, though peradventure you have little regarded it. But tarry a while, and you will be learned by experience. I see it begin already.

"To some men it shall seem by this my manner of writing, that I being (as they suppose, and as I have been falsely accused to be) one of the sect, do write in this manner because I would that both I and the same sect should be suffered without punishment. Nay truly; but rather I would that an evil-doer should be charitably punished, and in such manner as he might thereby be rather won with other than lost with a great many. And let his Majesty be further assured that he shall with no policy, nor with no threatenings of tortures and punishments take away the opinions of his people till his Grace shall fatherly and lovingly reform the clergy of his realm. For *there* springeth the opinion. From *thence* riseth the grudge of his people; out of *that* take and find men occasions to complain. If I say truth, let it be for such received. If otherwise, I protest before God and the world that whatsoever I here write I mean therein nothing but the honour, glory, and surety of my only Prince and Sovereign, and the public weal of his realm. And as to myself and the fame and opinion of [by] some men had of me, let all men know, whatsoever the world babble of me, that I am neither Lutheran nor *Tyndalian*

[1] This word does not occur, so far as I know, in any dictionary or glossary of the English language; it seems equivalent to the old *rout* or *rabble*.

[Tyndalyn in MS.]; nor have them or any other, or esteem them any other for my gods, nor for the persons in whom or in whose learning I have any trust; nor yet do trust in the doctrine and learning of any earthly creature: for all men be liars, *in quantum homines*, as Scripture saith [*i.e.*, as for men, they are deceitful]; and again *maledictus qui confidit in homine* [*i.e.*, cursed is he who putteth his trust in man]. Christ's Church hath admitted me a learning sufficient and infallible, and by Christ taught, which is the Holy Scripture; let the world brawl, I am sure to have none other. I find not myself deceived, nor I trust shall be. As the world goeth, men's learnings are not to be trusted; God's learning cannot deceive [me, if] that I embrace it humbly and with reverence. His learning is an only truth in the world; and among men, besides that, is there found no truth, but the contrary, sin, untruth, corruption, and wretchedness.

"And as to my truth to my Prince and Sovereign, and my service towards his Grace, be not afraid, nor think that any worldly thing can corrupt my mind or move my body or any member thereof, once to think or do any manner of thing that shall not both become a Christian man and also a true and faithful subject to his Prince. If I were of another sort, and as the more part are, I might by chance obtain more favour. But whatsoever I do or shall do to my Prince I do it not for any reward, nor thereby seek reward, which with half an eye ye may apperceive; and whether I be rewarded or not rewarded it is all ones to me, I will nevertheless do my duty: God hath eyes to see; and His reward prepared, and will prepare a living for me wheresoever I be come, no less than He doth for those His creatures which neither sow nor mow. I am unkindly handled to have such sharp inquisitions made of me in mine absence; I am unkindly handled for my service. Such stripes and bitter rewards would [make] faint and make weak the heart of some men towards their Prince: but I am the stronger because I know my truth, and am at defiance with all men pretending the contrary.

What should I be longer in declaring my mind? Receive you the sum thereof in short words. I will not be untrue to my Prince, though he were the odiablest [most odious] person of his realm, though his governance were such as should offend both heaven and [earth]. As his Grace is the very contrary, most noble, gracious, benign, and . . . . am I not commanded by God to be obedient to my Prince? Do I not by the contrary break God's ordinance? Am I ignorant in these things, supposeth the world, [whose] eyes are covered with ambition, dissimulation, and such like? I can no longer forbear, but show you my mind; it pierceth my heart with a deadly wound when I hear that I am otherwise meant. I had much rather forsake my natural country, my most dear friends and family, and wander into some strange region and country, there to lead the rest of my short life than thus to be handled for my true service and good mind; considering that truth hath no better estimation, is so much . . . . . standeth in such danger, and is so vilely reputed.

"I hear everywhere how diligently my Lord Chancellor inquireth of all those he examineth in cases of heresy, for me—what are my manners, my opinions, my conversation, my faith; finally, what is my life ent . . . . [entirely?]. And besides him there be other deputed for such like examinations, which also make like inquisitions. Wherefore take they so great pains? what think they to hear? or what think they that I am less than they? As concerning my creation, a man, a sinner, a vessel conceived in sin, finally a wretched creature, barren and devoid of goodness: and this might they consider, without so great painstaking. Who so miserable a creature as I am? beholding himself to be threatened with men so . . . . and puissant would not think himself to be in great danger? Who so unkindly and unchristianly entreated may not wofully sing the verses painted in your stained cloth, resembling [*i.e.*, representing] the evertion [overthrow] of Italy, changing the feminine into the masculine:—

'Et sola et mediis herens in fluctibus, ecce !
Me miseram quantis undique pressa malis.'[1]

"I see there is no remedy but I must depart out of this country. I am here suspected above all men. I would it might please his Grace to license me to come into his realm, and no longer to be here occupied in these things which so dangerously threaten my displeasure [discomfort]. I shall be contented to live in a corner of his realm, far from the company of men, and there to pass the residue of my short time. I have too much laboured in truth. My policies have been here divers; my conversation amongst men, like unto theirs; amongst Christians, I have been a Christian; amongst Jews, like to them; amongst Lutherans, a Lutheran also. What can I here do without such policy? Shall such policies hurt me, because I used them to compass other things? Then, either think they that they sent a fool, or me constrain they to think, that they have no discreet perseverance.

"Another thing that most grieveth me is this, that by this mean I should [*i.e.*, am likely to] lose a most dear friend and special good master of you, as I have been lately informed, and that you have excused you to the King's Majesty for me [*i.e.*, for recommending me], and showed to him that you are very sorry that ever you commended or advanced me to his Majesty—considering that I am of such sort as I am, and that you were greatly deceived by me—supposing that I had been far otherwise disposed than I now am. Thus saith my Lord Chancellor, and so it is reported to me, of his mouth. If you have so done, then again increase my troubles into a more bitter passion than ever; and think not but whatsoever you have said, or shall say, have done, or shall do, it cannot yet turn my heart from you, of whom I have received far greater pleasures than these displeasures. But rather I will owe you all my powers (besides that part which longeth to

[1] *i. e.*, Alone and in the midst of the waves, behold with how great evils I, wretch that I am, am on all sides overwhelmed !

God) while I live, and will not be driven from you, though my body should extremely suffer. I speak it not feignedly, intending by such colour and manner of writing to win your favour, or to gape for your gift, having no need thereof; nor, God willing, shall have, being right able, *partout*, as the Frenchman saith, to get my living. But I declare, by this my writing unto you, the earnest meaning of my heart, and that thereunto your exceeding merits have before drawn me, *nolens volens*. Here leave I to write any farther of this matter, till I hear either from you or some other my friends.

"Master Elyot, the king's ambassador [the envoy commissioned to entrap Tyndale], this day sent me a letter from Tournay with another enclosed to you, wherein I think he desires you to be a solicitor to the King's Majesty and to his honourable Council for him, that he may from time to time have answer of his letters, and be made thereby more able to do the King honour in these parts. It is not well done that *he should be so long without letters*, considering his little experience in these parts, who, in short time, in mine opinion, would do right well if he were a little holpen. . . . . George Constantine came to Antwerp after his breaking from my Lord Chancellor, the sixth day of December. With him nor with none other such, will I meddle or have to do, considering that I am beaten with mine own labours."[1]

The mysterious silence of the authorities at home, who seemed to receive communication after communication from their diplomatic agents abroad without deigning any acknowledgment, still continued. Even this despatch from Vaughan, plain spoken enough, one would have supposed, to have drawn from Henry and Cromwell an immediate reply, and perhaps a sharp reprimand, was treated with the same incomprehensible reserve. Once more, therefore, and for the last

[1] Cotton MSS., *Galba*, B. x. pp. 21, etc. I omit the rest of the letter, which contains an elaborate account of the visit of the Emperor Charles to Tournay a few days before.

time Vaughan addresses Cromwell on the subject of his dealing with Tyndale and the imputations in which he had been involved. "Divers and [many letters I] have written and sent to you, trusting again to receive yours, but hith[erto, since] my coming out of England, I have but only received one letter from you, [which] causeth me not so often to write as I would. Wherefore when it shall stand with your pleasure, I humbly desire you to have memory of me. . . . . .

"I hear of divers, as well men as women of the Lutheran sect, whose persons nor names I know not, nor will know, to be fled out of England for fear of punishment, and that lately, bringing with them all that ever they can make: so that by this means it is likely that new *Tyndales* shall spring or worse than he. I am unwise thus to write, being so unkindly entreated in England in examinations, so that it seemeth that my poor [house], my body, and finally my life, standeth only in the untrue reports of any evil disposed person within the King's realm; which being examined of me, will by chance evomit or spit out any venom against me, whereby he may trust to scape himself. Doth such unkindness, trow you, move me to use any policy with these manner of people, or to go about anything which by chance might either help or [ease]? Nay, truly; but much rather I am utterly determined from henceforth, never to intermeddle or to have communication with any one of them; but shall rather give place to some other man, which peradventure shall have better luck than I hitherto have had; whom they go about thus unkindly to threaten, beat, rend, and tear for my service. I marvel of their exceeding thrist [*i.e.*, thirst] to bring me in danger, which never offended them. What Job could here have patience? What mind so quiet, would not here be troubled? Let their manners, their behaviours, their meanings, their communications, their companies, their opinions, their conversations, the orders of their livings in all things, be as nearly examined as mine; as subtilly searched and tried as mine; by so many sundry persons as mine; and what think you

they shall be found innocents? Nay, *nocentes* [*i.e.*, guilty]; yea worse, peradventure, than he of whom they so greedily examine. I would they all, which so greedily examine, did know, I am no heretic, nor for them all will be made one. I neither have so corrupt a mind, so evil a conscience, nor so little understanding as it seemeth they would I had, which seek ways to destroy the innocent. I pray God amend them. If in any part of this my writing I have erred or offended, I ask thereof pardon, my passion is so great I cannot resist."[1]

Vaughan was evidently alarmed by the proceedings in England; he had protested with rare boldness against that mistaken policy of violence and persecution which Henry was pursuing, or permitting to be pursued; he admired Tyndale, and sympathised with the popular desire for a reformation of the clergy; but he was not prepared to expose himself to further danger by openly identifying himself with the cause of the persecuted. He disapproved entirely of the crusade instigated by More and the bishops against the English Reformers; but he was, as he himself said, neither a Lutheran nor a Tyndalian. Tyndale was secure from any violent or dishonourable proceeding on the part of Vaughan; but the kind-hearted and high-souled envoy was only *almost*, not *altogether* persuaded to adopt the opinions of the great Translator. We cannot doubt but that Tyndale deeply appreciated the sympathy which Vaughan had so evidently felt for his unworthy treatment; and we readily own to a deep debt of gratitude to the official, whose kindness comforted the heart of the noble martyr in his exile, and whose writings have preserved for posterity such genuine and picturesque glimpses of the personal history of the Reformer.

[1] Cotton MSS., *Galba* B. x. p. 26.

CHAPTER XI.

ATTEMPTS TO SEIZE TYNDALE: HIS RENEWED WANDERINGS: CONTINUED LITERARY LABOURS: FRYTH ARRESTED AND MARTYRED IN ENGLAND: TYNDALE'S LETTERS TO FRYTH: HIS FINAL REMOVAL TO ANTWERP.

A.D. 1532—1533.

THE position of Tyndale in those days of ill-defined international law was at once anomalous and dangerous. An exile from England, he was still a subject of Henry; and, had there been any good understanding between the English King and the Emperor, Tyndale might have been seized and delivered into the hands of his own monarch to be dealt with according to law. Fortunately for Tyndale, the friendly feeling, which had for many years subsisted between two sovereigns allied by marriage and a common policy, had been converted into mutual jealousy, by the agitation of Henry's divorce. In these circumstances Charles was not likely to lend any aid towards the apprehension of Tyndale; but might rather be expected to protect one who was an annoyance to his rival. At the same time it was perfectly competent for Henry, by force or by fraud, to gain possession of this exiled subject, whose writings made him so formidable a power in England. In spite, therefore, of the growing dissensions between Henry and the Emperor, which threatened every day to break out into open warfare, Tyndale knew that it was necessary to use every precaution in order to secure his personal safety. We have seen the care which he exercised in concealing his residence even from an envoy so friendly as Vaughan; and as he was probably not uninformed

of the change which had come over Henry's intentions towards him, he had no resource left but to defeat all further violence by eluding observation. This was not on the whole very difficult to do; and that Tyndale was perfectly successful, will be apparent from the despatch of the agent, to whom the odious task of apprehending him had been entrusted. Sir Thomas Elyot, for whom Vaughan had entreated Cromwell's sympathy, had at length received instructions from Henry, and cheered by this recognition into an outburst of grateful loyalty, he thus writes from Ratisbon, where he had gone, in the company of Cranmer, not yet archbishop, to be present at the assembly of the German Diet:— [1]

"My duty remembered, with most humble thanks unto your Grace [that it] pleased you so benevolently to remember me unto the King's High[ness], concerning my return into England. Albeit the King willeth me by [his] Grace's letters, to remain at Brussels some space of time *for the apprehension of Tyndale*, which somewhat minisheth my hope of soon return: *considering that like as he is in wit movable, semblably so is his person uncertain to come by: and as far as I can perceive, hearing of the King's diligence in the apprehension of him, he withdraweth him into such places where he thinketh to be farthest out of danger.* In me there shall lack none endeavour. Finally, as I am all the King's except my soul, so shall I endure all that shall be his pleasure, employing my poor life gladly, in that which may be to his honour or wealth of his realm.

"Pleaseth it your Grace, according as I have written to the King's Highness, the Emperor being yet sore grieved with a fall from his horse, keepeth himself so close that Mr. Cranmer and I can have none access to his majesty, which almost grieveth me as much as the Emperor's fall grieveth him. I

[1] *Vitellius*, B. XXI. fol. 58 of the new notation. The despatch is addressed to the Duke of Norfolk: he had previously written to the King, but that despatch, like most of those so addressed, has not yet been recovered. The words in brackets are, as usual, supplied from conjecture, the MS. being burnt in those places.

have promised to the King to write to your Grace the order of things in the town of Nurenburg specially concerning the faith [*i.e.*, an account of the religious practices observed by the Reformed]. But first I will rehearse some other towns, as they lay in our way. The city of Worms [Tyndale's former residence] for the more part and almost the whole, is possessed with Lutherans and Jews; the residue is indifferent to be shortly the one or the other. Truth it is that the bishop keepeth well his name of *Episcopus*, which is in English an *overseer;* and is in the case that overseers of testaments be in England; for he shall have leave to *look* so that he meddle not. Yet sometime men calleth him *overseen*, that is, *drunk*, when he neither knoweth what he doeth, nor what he ought to do. The city of Spires, as I hear say, keepeth yet their faith well, except some say, there be many do err in taking so largely this article, *sanctorum communionem* [*i.e.*, the communion of saints], which hath induced more charity than may stand with honesty [in fact, as he goes on to describe, the inhabitants were rather free and easy in their conduct; or, as the marginal note expresses it, "the city was full of wantonness"]. All towns ensuing be rather worse than better; but I pass them over at this time. Touching Nurenburg, it is the most proper town, and best-ordered public weal that ever I beheld. . . . Although I had a chaplain, yet could not I be suffered to have him to sing mass, but was constrained to hear theirs, which is but one in a church, and that is celebrated in form following. The priest, in vestments after our manner, singeth every thing in Latin as we use, omitting suffrage; the Epistle he readeth in Latin. In the meantime the subdeacon goeth into the pulpit, and readeth to the people the Epistle *in their vulgar*. After, they peruse other things as our priests do. Then the priest readeth *softly* the Gospel in Latin; in the mean space the deacon goeth into the pulpit and readeth *aloud* the Gospel in the Almayne [*i.e.*, German] tongue. Mr. Cranmer said it was showed to him that in the Epistles and Gospels they kept not the order that

we do, but do peruse every day one chapter of the New Testament: afterwards the priest and the choir do sing the *Credo* as we do."

The rest of Elyot's letter does not concern us, and need not be quoted; the description of Nuremberg has been given mainly because it is believed that Tyndale himself visited that quaint old-fashioned city not very long after the envoy had left it. Elyot's attempts to apprehend Tyndale were perfectly futile; he tried, by bribery, to ascertain the Reformer's lurking-place, but in vain; and the only other despatch in which he makes any allusion to this part of his commission is written in a tone of mortified disappointment, which the reader will probably not peruse without a smile of malicious satisfaction. Writing to Cromwell in the month of November of this same year, 1532, he bursts out into a vein of extravagant flattery eminently characteristic of the man.

"When I first heard that his Grace intended to pass the seas," says he, "fear of the great adventure of his most royal person so attacked my heart [it was of a voyage across the Channel from Dover to Boulogne that the envoy speaks in these exaggerated words], that since, unto this day, it hath bereft me the more part of my sleep." He had been comforted, however, and his sleep had been restored to him by the joyful intelligence of Henry's safe return from the prodigious voyage of thirty miles, "of which," says he, with incredible fawning, "I was more glad than of anything that ever happened unto myself." Having thus attempted to propitiate the favour of Cromwell, he proceeded to what was the real purpose of his letter, to complain that in his embassy abroad he had spent far more money than he had received, and had seriously run into debt. "I gave many rewards," he adds, enumerating the various sources of his losses, "partly to the emperor's servants to get knowledge, partly to such as by whose means *I trusted to apprehend Tyndale, according to the King's commandment.*"[1]

[1] *Chapter-house Papers*, Vol. x.

Tyndale was still earnestly bent on the prosecution of his great design of providing his countrymen with an exposition of Holy Scripture, free from the allegorical fancies and the traditional interpretations which had so long obscured the true meaning. His Exposition of the Epistles of St. John had already appeared in 1531; and this year he issued a further and far more important instalment, an *Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount;* a sermon which he truly declares to be "the key and the door of the Scripture, and the restoring again of Moses' law corrupt by Scribes and Pharisees," as the Exposition was "the restoring again of Christ's law corrupt by the papists."[1] These words, which formed the title prefixed to the Exposition, sufficiently indicate the polemical tone which was likely to predominate in the book. It was in those days unhappily inevitable, that every exposition of Scripture must be more or less controversial. It is so at every period of Reformation, at every epoch when the human mind, long bound down by tradition and authority, dares to assert its own freedom and independence. In Tyndale's own phraseology, "the Scribes and Pharisees, those wicked and spiteful Philistines, had stopped and filled up the wells of Abraham with the earth of their false expositions .... with the thorns and bushes of their Pharisaical glosses they had stopped up the narrow way and strait gate [so] that few could find them." Christ had in His ministry "digged again the wells of Abraham," and "weeded out the thorns and bushes," amidst manifold opposition and condemnation from the great dignities in Church and State of His day; and now once more the same function fell to be performed by Tyndale and others who had penetrated through all obstacles to the living wells of Scripture.

This consideration has been too much overlooked by those who take umbrage at the strong polemical tone which pervades the writings of the Reformers. In an age of unfettered

[1] Such is the title on what I believe to be a copy of the original edition.

liberty of speech, an expositor may perhaps appropriately develop his own views of Scriptural interpretation without attacking those of others; but at a time when no liberty of speech was tolerated, when by Imperial edict any man in the Low Countries who wrote or printed any book on any subject whatever without licence from the authorities, that is to say, from the bishop, was exposed to the penalty of a public whipping, and was, besides, to be branded or to lose an eye at the discretion of the judge;[1] when in England any one who dared to impugn the teaching of the Church in any particular, in public or in private, or who presumed to read any so-called heretical book or even the Holy Scriptures in English, did so at the peril of his goods, his freedom, or his life: at such a time every exposition which was not merely the repetition of the old traditional *shibboleths* was of necessity polemical.

Tyndale's *Exposition on the Sermon of the Mount* is the ablest of all his expository works, distinguished by all his customary clearness, and by a breadth and liberality of view which some writers seem not to have recognised as existing amongst the early Reformers. But of these characteristics Tyndale's own words are better proofs than any assertions of a biographer.

As in some of his previous works, we can discover in the Exposition traces of the influence of his great German contemporary. In this same year, 1532, Luther had published in German expository sermons on the same theme, and it is quite clear that Tyndale was acquainted with Luther's work, and used it in the composition of his own Exposition. George Joye, indeed, in his spiteful *Apology*, declares that Tyndale was wont to praise his own Exposition in such extravagant language that his "ears glowed for shame to hear him," whilst it was in reality "Luther that made it, Tyndale only but translating and powdering it here and there with his own fantasies;"[2] but on this point we are able to judge

[1] Brandt's *History of the Reformation in the Low Countries.*

[2] Joye's *Apology*: Arber's reprint, p. 42.

for ourselves by comparing the two treatises; and a careful examination shows that while occasional verbal coincidences occur, sufficient to demonstrate that Tyndale had Luther's German work before him as he wrote, there is no real foundation for Joye's ill-natured insinuation.

The tone of the work is sufficiently indicated in the following paragraphs from the Prologue:—

"The Church of Christ is the multitude of all them that believe in Christ for the remission of sin; and of a thankfulness for that mercy, love the law of God purely and without glosses; and, of hate they have to the sin of this world, long for the life to come. This is the Church that cannot err damnably; nor any long time; nor all of them: but as soon as any question ariseth, the truth of God's promise stirreth up one or other to teach them the truth of everything needful to salvation out of God's Word; and lighteneth the hearts of the other true members to see the same, and to consent thereto. . . . To believe in Christ's blood for the remission of sin, and purchasing of all the good promises that help to the life to come; and to love the law; and to long for the life to come; is the inward baptism of the soul, the baptism that only [*i.e.*, alone] availeth in the sight of God; the new generation [*i.e.*, new birth] and image of Christ; the only key also to bind and loose sinners; the touchstone to try all doctrines; the lantern and light that scattereth and expelleth the mist and darkness of all hypocrisy, and a preservative against all error and heresy; the mother of all good works; the earnest of everlasting life, and title whereby we challenge our inheritance. . . . If thou wilt be sure that thy faith be perfect, then examine thyself whether thou love the law. And in like manner, if thou wilt know whether thou love the law aright, then examine thyself whether thou believe in Christ only for the remission of sin, and obtaining the promises made in the Scripture. And even so, compare thy hope of the life to come unto faith and love, and to hating the sin of this life; which hate the love to the law engendereth in thee. And if they accompany not one another, all three together, then be sure that all is but hypocrisy."[1]

Many isolated passages might be selected from the Exposition which would admirably illustrate the various features exhibited in the work; the reader will, however, prefer to see a continuous extract, as a more genuine representation of its general character and execution. The following is, therefore, selected as a fair specimen of Tyndale's style as an expositor:—

[1] Tyndale's *Expositions*, pp. 12–14.

ST. MATTHEW V. 13.

"'Ye be the salt of the earth: but if the salt be waxen unsavoury, what can be salted therewith? It is henceforth nothing worth, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.'

"The office of an apostle and true preacher is to salt, not only the corrupt manners and conversation of earthly people, but also the rotten heart within, and all that springeth out thereof: their natural reason, their will, their understanding and wisdom; yea, and their faith and belief, and all that they have imagined without God's Word concerning righteousness, justifying, satisfaction and serving of God. And the nature of salt is to bite, fret, and make smart. And the sick patients of the world are marvellous impatient, so that, though with great pain they can suffer their gross sins to be rebuked under a fashion, as in a parable afar off; yet, to have their righteousness, their holiness, and serving of God and His saints, disallowed, improved [*i.e.*, disproved], and condemned for damnable and devilish, that may they not abide: insomuch that thou must leave thy salting or else be prepared to suffer again; even to be called a railer, seditious, a maker of discord, and a troubler of the common peace; yea, a schismatic, and an heretic also; and to be lied upon, that thou hast done and said that thou never thoughtest, and then to be called *coram nobis* [before us, *i.e.*, to be summoned for trial], and to sing a new song [recant], and forswear salting, or else to be sent after thy fellows that are gone before, and the way thy Master went.

"True preaching is a salting that stirreth up persecution; and an office that no man is meet for, save he that is seasoned himself before with poverty in spirit, softness, meekness, patience, mercifulness, pureness of heart, and hunger of righteousness, and looking for persecution also; and hath all his hope, comfort, and solace in the blessing only, and in no worldly thing.

"Nay, will some say, a man might preach long enough without persecution, yea, and get favour too, if he would not meddle with the pope, bishops, prelates, and holy ghostly people [*i.e.*, monks] that live in contemplation and solitariness, nor with great men of the world. I answer, true preaching is salting; and all that is corrupt must be salted: and those persons are of all other most corrupt, and therefore may not be left untouched.

"The pope's pardons must be rebuked; the abuse of the mass, of the sacraments, and of all the ceremonies, must be rebuked and salted. And selling of merits, and of prayers, must be salted. The abuse of fasting and of pilgrimage must be salted. All idolatry and false faith must be rebuked. And those friars that teach men to believe in St. Francis' coat, how that they shall never come in hell or purgatory, if they be buried therein, may not be passed over with silence.

"The pain and grief of salting made monks flee to their cloister. Nay (say they), we went thither of pure devotion to pray for the people. Yea,

but for all that, the more ye increase, and the more ye multiply your prayers, the worse the world is. That is not our fault (say they), but theirs; that they dispose not themselves, but continue in sin, and so are unapt to receive the influence of our prayers. O hypocrites! if ye were true salt and had good hearts and loved your neighbours (if dead men be neighbours to them that are alive), and would come out of your dens, and take pain to salt and season them, ye should make a great many of them so apt that your prayers might take effect. But now seeing, as ye say, they be so unsavoury that your prayers be to them unprofitable, though their goods be to you profitable, and yet ye have no compassion to come out and salt them, it is manifest that ye love not them, but theirs; and that ye pray not for them, but, under the colour of praying, mock them and rob them.

"Finally, salt, which is the true understanding of the law, of faith, and of the intent of all works, hath in you lost her virtue; neither be there any so unsavoury in the world as ye are, nor any that so sore kick against true salting as ye: and therefore are ye to be cast out, and trodden under foot, and despised of all men, by the righteous judgment of God.

"'If salt have lost its saltness, it is good for nothing but to be trodden under foot of men.' That is, if the preacher, which for his doctrine is called salt, have lost the nature of salt, that is to say, his sharpness in rebuking all unrighteousness, all natural reason, natural wit and understanding, and all trust and confidence in whatsoever it be, save in the blood of Christ; he is condemned of God, and disallowed of all them that cleave to the truth. In what case stand they then that have benefices and preach not? Verily, though they stand at the altar, yet are they excommunicate and cast out of the living Church of Almighty God.

'And what if the doctrine be not true salt? Verily then is it to be trodden under foot; as must all wearish [*i.e.*, tasteless] and unsavoury ceremonies which have lost their significations, and not only teach not, and are become unprofitable and do no more service to man; but also have obtained authority as God in the heart of man, that man serveth them, and putteth in them the trust and confidence that he should put in God his Maker through Jesus Christ his redeemer. Are the institutions of man better than God's? Yea, are God's ordinances better now than in the old time? The prophets trod under foot, and defied the temple of God, and the sacrifices of God, and all ceremonies that God had ordained, with fastings and prayings, and all that the people perverted and committed idolatry with. We have as strait a commandment, to salt and rebuke all ungodliness, as had the prophets. Will they then have their ceremonies honourably spoken of? Then let them restore them to the right use, and put the salt of the true meaning and significations of them to them again. But as they be now used, none that loveth Christ can speak honourably of them. What true Christian man can give honour to that that taketh all honour from Christ? Who can give honour to that that slayeth

the soul of his brother, and robbeth his heart of that trust and confidence, which he should give to his Lord that hath bought him with His blood?

VERSES 14–16.

"'Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and so giveth it light to all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and praise your Father that is in heaven.'

"Christ goeth forth and describeth the office of an apostle and true preacher by another likeness; as he called them before the salt of the earth, even so here the light of the world: signifying thereby that all the doctrine, all the wisdom, and high knowledge of the world,—whether it were philosophy of natural conclusions, of manners and virtue, or of laws of righteousness,—whether it were of the Holy Scripture and of God Himself,—was yet but a darkness, until the doctrine of His apostles came; that is to say, until the knowledge of Christ came, how that He is the sacrifice for our sins, our satisfaction, our peace, atonement and redemption, our life thereto, and resurrection. Whatsoever holiness, wisdom, virtue, perfectness, or righteousness, is in the world among men, howsoever perfect and holy they appear; yet is all damnable darkness, except the right knowledge of Christ's blood be there first, to justify the heart, before all other holiness.

"Another conclusion: As 'a city built on a hill cannot be hid,' no more can the light of Christ's Gospel. Let the world rage as much as it will, yet it will shine on their sore eyes, whether they be content or no.

"Another conclusion: As 'men light not a candle to whelm it under a bushel, but to put it on a candlestick, to light all that are in the house;' even so the light of Christ's Gospel may not be hid, nor made a several [*i.e.*, isolated] thing, as though it pertained to some certain holy persons only. Nay, it is the light of the whole world, and pertaineth to all men; and therefore may not be made several. It is a madness that divers men say, 'The lay people may not know it:' except they can prove that the lay people be not of the world. Moreover it will not be hid; but as the lightning, that breaketh out of the clouds, shineth over all, even so doth the Gospel of Christ. For where it is truly received, there it purifieth the heart, and maketh the person to consent to the laws of God, and to begin a new and godly living, fashioned after God's laws, and without all dissimulation: and then it will kindle so great love in him toward his neighbour, that he shall not only have compassion on him in his bodily adversity, but much more pity him over the blindness of his soul, and minister to him Christ's Gospel. Wherefore if they say, 'It is here or there, in St. Francis' coat, or Dominick's and such like, and if thou wilt put on that coat, thou shalt find it there,' it is false. For if it were there, thou shouldest see it shine abroad, though thou creepest not into a cell or

a monk's cowl, as thou seest the lightning without creeping into the clouds: yea, their light would so shine that men should not only see the light of the Gospel, but also their 'good works,' which would as fast come out as they now run in; insomuch that thou shouldest see them make themselves poor, to help other, as they now make other poor, to make themselves rich.

"This light and salt pertained not then to the apostles, and now to our bishops and spiritualty, only. No; it pertaineth to the temporal men also. For all kings and all rulers are bound to be salt and light; not only in example of living, but also in teaching of doctrine unto their subjects, as well as they be bound to punish evil doers. Doth not the Scripture testify that King David was chosen to be a shepherd, and to feed his people with God's Word? It is an evil schoolmaster that cannot but beat only: but it is a good schoolmaster that so teacheth that few need to be beaten. This salt and light therefore pertain to the temporalty also, and that to every member of Christ's Church: so that every man ought to be salt and light to other.

"Every man then may be a common preacher, thou wilt say, and preach every where by his own authority. Nay, verily; no man may yet be a common preacher, save he that is called and chosen thereto by the common ordinance of the congregation, as long as the preacher teacheth the true word of God. But every private man ought to be, in virtuous living, both light and salt to his neighbour: insomuch that the poorest ought to strive to overrun [*i.e.*, excel] the bishop, and preach to him in ensample of living. Moreover, every man ought to preach in word and deed unto his household, and to them that are under his governance, etc. And though no man may preach openly, save he that hath the office committed unto him, yet ought every man to endeavour himself to be as well learned as the preacher, as nigh as it is possible. And every man may privately inform his neighbour; yea, and the preacher and bishop too, if need be. For if the preacher preach wrong, then may any man, whatsoever he be, rebuke him; first privately, and then, if that help not, to complain farther. And when all is proved [*i.e.*, tried], according to the order of charity, and yet none amendment had, then ought every man that can to resist him [*i.e.*, passively], and to stand by Christ's doctrine, and to jeopard life and all for it. Look on the old ensamples and they shall teach thee.

"The Gospel hath another freedom with her than the temporal regiment [*i.e.*, government]. Though every man's body and goods be under the king, do he right or wrong, yet is the authority of God's Word free, and above the king: so that the worst in the realm may tell the king, if he do him wrong, that he doth naught, and otherwise than God hath commanded him; and so warn him to avoid the wrath of God, which is the patient avenger of all unrighteousness. May I then, and ought also, to resist father and mother and all temporal power with God's Word, when they wrongfully do or command that [*i.e.*, what] hurteth or killeth the body;

and have I no power to resist the bishop or preacher, that with false doctrine slayeth the souls, for which my master and Lord Christ hath shed his blood? Be we otherwise under our bishops than Christ and His apostles and all the prophets were under the bishops of the old law? Nay, verily: and therefore may we, and also ought to do as they did, and to answer as the apostles did, *Oportet magis obedire Deo quam hominibus;* 'We must rather obey God than man.' In the Gospel every man is Christ's disciple, and a person [*i.e.*, parson, Tyndale here playing on the word] for himself, to defend Christ's doctrine in his own person. The faith of the bishop will not help me, nor the bishop's keeping the law is sufficient for me. But I must believe in Christ for the remission of all sin, for mine ownself, and in mine own person. No more is the bishop's or preacher's defending God's Word enough for me; but I must defend it in mine own person, and jeopard life and all thereon when I see need and occasion.

"I am bound to get worldly substance for myself and for mine household with my just labour; and somewhat more for them that cannot, to save my neighbour's body: and am I not more bound to labour for God's Word, to have thereof in store, to save my neighbour's soul? And when is it so much time to resist with God's Word and to help, as when they which are believed to minister the true word do slay the souls with false doctrine for covetousness' sake? He that is not ready to give his life for the maintenance of Christ's doctrine against hypocrites, with whatsoever name or title they be disguised, the same is not worthy of Christ, nor can be Christ's disciple, by the very words and testimony of Christ. Nevertheless we must use wisdom, patience, meekness, and a discreet process, after the due order of charity, in our defending the Word of God; lest, while we go about to amend our prelates, we make them worse. But when we have proved [*i.e.*, tried] all that charity bindeth us, and yet in vain; then we must come forth openly, and rebuke their wickedness in the face of the world, and jeopard life and all thereon."

Tyndale did not conclude his exposition without once again animadverting severely upon the supposed covetousness of the man who had been so terribly conspicuous in the cruelties perpetrated upon the unhappy Reformers in England. "*Covetousness*," he says, "maketh many whom the truth pleaseth at the beginning to cast it up again, and to be afterward the most cruel enemies thereof, after the ensample of Simon Magus; yea, and after the ensample of *Sir Thomas More*, Knight, which knew the truth, and for covetousness forsook it again, and conspired first with the cardinal to deceive the king, and to lead him in darkness; and afterward, when the light was sprung upon them, and had driven them clean out of the

Scripture, and had delivered it out of their tyranny, and had expelled the dark stinking mist of their devilish glosses, and had wiped away the cobwebs, which those poisoned spiders had spread upon the clear text, so that the spiritualty, as they call themselves, were ashamed of their part, as shameless as they be; yet for all that, *covetousness blinded the eyes of that gleering fox* more and more, and hardened his heart against the truth, with the confidence of his painted poetry, babbling eloquence, and juggling arguments of subtle sophistry, grounded on his *unwritten verities*, as true and authentic as his story of Utopia."[1]

We have already admitted that Tyndale was misinformed in alleging this charge against Sir Thomas More; but Sir Thomas's severity had been such as to predispose the friends of the Reformation to believe anything of him, however atrocious. The career of persecution still continued in England with unabated violence. Latimer, whom Tyndale had doubtless known at Cambridge, and of whose bold and spirited appeal to Henry to allow the free circulation of the Scriptures in England he had of course heard, had been dragged before Convocation, and forced into an ignominious submission;[2] and James Bainham, a learned lawyer, sprung from an old Gloucestershire family, and, therefore, in all probability, not unknown to Tyndale, had died a martyr's death in Smithfield on the last day of April. Stokesley and More had, in the last few months, made grievous inroads upon the circle of Tyndale's former friends and acquaintances; but the worst blow of all was yet to come.

At the end of July, 1532,[3] John Fryth, his bosom friend and dearest brother in the faith, set out once more on what proved his last journey to England. What induced him to

[1] *Exposition*, p. 100.

[2] See Demaus' *Latimer*, p. 132, etc. Vaughan, I am happy to say, had written strongly in Latimer's favour. His letter is in the State Paper Office.

[3] The date is given in Stokesley's *Register*: "Venit ultimo a partibus transmarinis circiter festum sancti Jacobi ultimo præteritum:" St. James' Day is July 25.

undertake a journey so likely to be fraught with peril it is now impossible to ascertain. Whether he hoped that More's resignation of the Great Seal (May 16) would diminish the rigour exhibited towards the Reformers; whether he fondly anticipated that the power of the clergy to punish would be seriously curtailed by the legislation, which had just deprived them of any right to promulgate enactments without the royal licence; or whether he had been deceived by the false assurances of some emissaries of Henry or the bishops, it is, in the absence of any authentic evidence, vain to inquire. Foxe seems at one time to suggest that he had come over at the request of some friends in England, at another, that his visit was necessary, in order to provide himself with money. At all events, he was not long in discovering the dangers in which his journey involved him. At Reading, whither he seems to have gone on some errand of importance, he was arrested as a vagabond; and being unable to give a satisfactory account of himself, he was set in the stocks, and kept there till he was half-starved. In his distress he asked that the schoolmaster of the place might be sent for, and to him he communicated the story of his misfortunes, and so charmed him with his learning, and, above all, with his rehearsing some lines of the Iliad in the original Greek, that he used his influence with the magistrates, and the unhappy prisoner was restored to liberty.

From Reading he directed his steps to London, intending, probably, to avail himself of the first opportunity to rejoin Tyndale on the Continent; but his presence in England soon became known to Sir Thomas More and the bishops, and every effort was made to seize him. "All the ways and havens were beset;" and great rewards were offered for his apprehension. Finding himself dogged at every turn, he endeavoured to screen himself by changing his abode, and by adopting a disguise. All, however, was in vain. It was possible to defeat the machinations of his enemies; but he could not escape the treachery of those who pretended to be

his friends. At the request of an "old familiar friend," one of whom he says, "for his commendable conversation, and sober behaviour, he might better be a bishop than many that wear mitres, if the rule of St. Paul were regarded in their election," he had written a short treatise on the *Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ*. He had expressed himself with great caution on this fiercely controverted subject; yet his opinions were sure to be stigmatised as grossly heretical if they came to the notice of the ecclesiastical authorities; and the treatise was incautiously permitted to come into the hands of a traitor, who immediately carried it to Sir Thomas More. So numerous, indeed, were the spies who had wormed themselves into the confidence of the unsuspecting Reformers, that More had two other surreptitious copies of the same treatise offered at the same time, by men who were thus ready to betray those whom they professed to revere.

Thus surrounded by treachery, Fryth soon fell into the hands of his enemies; he was taken at Milton-shore (near Southend), in Essex, on his way to embark for the Continent, and was conveyed to London and brought before More and the bishops. All this had apparently occurred in the autumn of 1532; for before the close of the year Sir Thomas More, who seems to have assumed the responsible position of Advocate-General for the Church—or "Proctor for Purgatory," as Tyndale wittily styles him, had printed a reply to that treatise on the Sacrament which had led to Fryth's apprehension.[1] Sir Thomas's reply is written in a very different spirit from his fierce invectives against Tyndale; Fryth is treated as a young and inexperienced scholar, who had been seduced into erroneous opinions by older and more determined heretics, and who might perhaps be gained back to the true faith by argument and kindness.

Fryth had been, indeed, committed to the Tower; but it almost appeared as if the danger which threatened him might

[1] Fryth saw it in the Bishop of Winchester's palace on St. Stephen's Day, *i.e.*, December 26th.

be dissipated. For rapid changes were taking place in England. A month after Fryth's arrival, Archbishop Warham had died, and Henry had selected, as his successor in the primacy, Thomas Cranmer, a man who could not, indeed, be at that time claimed as a pronounced adherent of the cause of the Reformation, but whose sympathies inclined him strongly towards the Reformers, and who was certainly not disposed to adopt any harsh measures in dealing with men accused of heresy. In the commencement of 1533, moreover, Henry had brought the long-agitated divorce question to a termination by marrying Anne Boleyn; and Sir Thomas More, who had been holding a species of indefinite deputed authority since his resignation of the Chancellorship, was in January formally divested of his office, and retired into private life. Everything seemed to prognosticate the downfall of that *régime* which had rekindled the fires of Smithfield; and but for the tyranny of previous legislation, the reign of Henry would probably not have been stained by the martyrdom of Fryth.

Before intelligence of Fryth's apprehension had reached the Continent, Tyndale, who may have heard in Antwerp the dangers by which his friend was threatened, wrote him a letter of affectionate caution; warning him especially of the necessity of guarding against committing himself by rash and dogmatic assertions on doctrinal questions that were not of fundamental importance. Tyndale's letters, unfortunately, have almost all perished, and the reader will, therefore, value the more highly the few that have been preserved to us. To Fryth, the dearest and most like-minded of all his friends, he, as might have been expected, unbosoms himself without reserve; and the letter is, accordingly, an invaluable piece of autobiography:—

"The grace of our Saviour Jesus, His patience, meekness, humbleness, circumspection, and wisdom, be with your heart. Amen.

"Dearly beloved brother Jacob, mine heart's desire in our

Saviour Jesus is, that you arm yourself with patience, and be cold, sober, wise, and circumspect: and that you keep you a-low by the ground, avoiding high questions that pass the common capacity. But expound the law truly, and open the vail of Moses, to condemn all flesh, and prove all men sinners, and all deeds under the law, before mercy have taken away the condemnation thereof, to be sin and damnable: and then, as a faithful minister, set abroach the mercy of our Lord Jesus, and let the wounded consciences drink of the water of Him. And then shall your preaching be with power, and not as the doctrine of the hypocrites; and the Spirit of God shall work with you, and all consciences shall bear record unto you, and feel that it is so. And all doctrine that casteth a mist on those two, to shadow and hide them (I mean the law of God and mercy of Christ), that resist you with all your power. Sacraments without signification refuse. If they put significations to them receive them, if you see it may help [*i.e.*, may be of any spiritual advantage], though it be not necessary.

"Of the Presence of Christ's body in the Sacrament, meddle as little as you can, that there appear no division among us. Barnes [a Lutheran, and always hot-tempered] will be hot against you. The Saxons be sore on the affirmative; whether constant or obstinate, I remit it to God. Philip Melanchthon is said to be with the French king [a mistaken rumour]. There be in Antwerp that say they saw him come into Paris with a hundred and fifty horses; and that they spoke with him. If the Frenchmen receive the Word of God, he will plant the affirmative [*i.e.*, the Presence of Christ's body, as held by the Lutherans] in them. George Joye would have put forth a treatise of the matter, but I have stopped him as yet: what he will do if he get money, I wot not. I believe he would make many reasons, little serving the purpose. My mind is that nothing be put forth, till we hear how you shall have sped. I would have the right use [of the Sacrament] preached, and the Presence to be an

indifferent thing, till the matter might be reasoned in peace at leisure of both parties. If you be required, show the phrases of the Scripture [*i.e.*, use simply the words of Scripture], and let them talk what they will. For to believe that God is everywhere, hurteth no man that worshippeth Him nowhere but within in the heart, in the spirit and verity: even so to believe that the body of Christ is everywhere, though it cannot be proved, hurteth no man that worshippeth Him nowhere save in the faith of His Gospel. You perceive my mind: howbeit, if God show you otherwise, it is free for you to do as He moveth you.

"I guessed long ago, that God would send a dazing into the head of the spiritualty, to be catched themselves in their own subtlety; and I trust it is come to pass. And now methinketh I smell a Council to be taken, little for their profits in time to come. But you must understand that it is not of a pure heart, and for love of the truth; but to avenge themselves, and to eat the whore's flesh, and to suck the marrow of her bones. Wherefore cleave fast to the rock of the help of God, and commit the end of all things to Him: and if God shall call you, that you may then use the wisdom of the worldly, as far as you perceive the glory of God may come thereof, refuse it not: and ever among thrust in, *that the Scripture may be in the mother tongue*, and learning set up in the Universities. But and if aught be required contrary to the glory of God and His Christ, then stand fast, and commit yourself to God; *and be not overcome of men's persuasions*, which haply shall say, we see no other way [*i.e.*, but yielding and abjuring], to bring in the truth.

"Brother Jacob, beloved in my heart, there liveth not in whom I have so good hope and trust, and in whom mine heart rejoiceth, and my soul comforteth herself, as in you, not the thousand part so much of [*i.e.*, for] your learning and what other gifts else you have, as that you will creep a-low by the ground, and walk in those things that the conscience may feel, and not in the imaginations of the brain; in fear, and not

in boldness; in open necessary things, and not to pronounce or define of hid secrets, or things that neither help or hinder, whether they be so or no; in unity, and not in seditious opinions; insomuch that if [*i.e.*, although] you be sure you know, yet in things that may abide leisure, you will defer, or say (till other agree with you), 'Methink the text requireth this sense or understanding:' yea, and that if [*i.e.*, although] you be sure that your part be good, and another hold the contrary, yet if it be a thing that maketh no matter, you will laugh and let it pass, and refer the thing to other men, and stick you stiffly and stubbornly in earnest and necessary things. And I trust you be persuaded even so of me. *For I call God to record against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, to give a reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God's Word against my conscience, nor would this day, if all that is in the earth, whether it be pleasure, honour, or riches, might be given me.* Moreover, I take God to record to my conscience, that I desire of God to myself, in this world, no more than that without which I cannot keep His laws.

"Finally, if there were in me any gift that could help at hand, and aid you if need required, I promise you I would not be far off, and commit the end to God: *my soul is not faint though my body be weary.* But God hath made me evil-favoured in this world, and without grace in the sight of men, speechless and rude, dull and slow-witted. Your part shall be to supply that lacketh in me; remembering that as lowliness of heart shall make you high with God, even so meekness of words shall make you sink into the hearts of men. Nature giveth age authority; but meekness is the glory of youth, and giveth them honour. Abundance of love maketh me exceed in babbling.

"Sir, as concerning purgatory, and many other things, if you be demanded, you may say, if you err, the spiritualty hath so led you; and that they have taught you to believe as you do. For they preached you all such things out of God's Word,

and alleged a thousand texts; by reason of which texts you believed as they taught you. But now you find them liars, and that the texts mean no such things, and, therefore, you can believe them no longer; but are as ye were before they taught you, and believe no such thing; howbeit you [may say you] are ready to believe, if they have any other way to prove it; for without proof you cannot believe them, when you have found them with so many lies, etc. If you perceive wherein we may help, either in being still, or doing somewhat, let us have word, and I will do mine uttermost.

"My Lord of London hath a servant called John Tisen, with a red beard, and a black reddish head, and was once my scholar; he was seen in Antwerp, but came not among the Englishmen: whether he is gone, an embassador secret, I wot not.

"The mighty God of Jacob be with you to supplant His enemies, and give you the favour of Joseph; and the wisdom and the spirit of Stephen be with your heart and with your mouth, and teach your lips what they shall say, and how to answer to all things. He is our God, if we despair in ourselves, and trust in Him; and His is the glory. Amen.

WILLIAM TYNDALE.

"I hope our redemption is nigh."

Tyndale's warning came too late. Before his letter reached England, Fryth had already been entrapped into the very snare against which his more prudent friend had so earnestly cautioned him. He had already committed himself on that very subject of the Presence of Christ in the Supper on which the whole zeal of the Church, shaken on other points, had concentrated itself, as their stronghold against heresy; and though he had expressed himself with caution and moderation, he had unquestionably laid himself open to be accused as a heretic. As Sir Thomas More affirmed, he had taught "all the poison that Wickliffe, Huskyn [*i.e.*, Œcolampadius], Tyndale, and Zwinglius had taught concerning the blessed

Sacrament of the altar, not only affirming it to be very bread still, as Luther doth, but also, as *these other beasts do*, saith it is nothing else."

In these circumstances nothing remained for Fryth but, if possible, to defend his opinion, and to show that what he had taught was in accordance with the plain sense of Scripture and the writings of the early fathers. For some time he could not succeed in procuring a copy of More's letter, which was studiously restricted in its circulation; at length he obtained "one written copy," and immediately undertook to refute the arguments of his antagonist. He laboured, of course, under serious disadvantage, not only as a youthful champion against one of the most subtle and learned of controversialists; but also, as he himself with touching simplicity says, "I am, in a manner, as a man bound to a post, and cannot so well bestow me in my play, as if I were at liberty; for I may not have such books as are necessary for me; neither get pen, ink, nor paper, but only secretly; so that I am in continual fear both of the Lieutenant [of the Tower] and of my keeper, lest they should espy any such thing by me. . . . Whensoever I hear the keys ring at the doors, straight all must be conveyed out of the way; and then if any notable thing had been in my mind, it was clean lost."[1] The change of affairs at the commencement of 1533 somewhat relaxed the rigour of his imprisonment; his keeper, "upon condition of his own word and promise, let him go at liberty during the night to consult with good men;" and thus assisted with possible access to books, he produced a *Reply* that must have satisfied More that he had been somewhat over-sanguine in anticipating an easy victory over the stripling who had attacked the dogmas of the Church.

To us the interest of Fryth's *Answer to Sir Thomas More* centres in its allusions to the man whom Fryth knew better than any other. Sir Thomas More had spoken of Tyndale as *a beast*, Fryth thus nobly defends his friend:—"Tyndale, I

[1] Fryth's *Answer to Rastell.*

trust, liveth, well content with such a poor Apostle's life as God gave His Son Christ, and His faithful ministers in this world, which *is not sure of so many mites as ye be yearly of pounds;* although I am sure that for his learning and judgment in Scripture, he were more worthy to be promoted than all the Bishops in England. I received a letter from him which was written since Christmas [of 1532], wherein among other matters he writeth thus: 'I call God to record' [etc., as in Tyndale's letter already given, which is hereby identified as sent to Fryth]. Judge, Christian reader, whether these words be not spoken of a faithful, clear, innocent heart. And as for his behaviour, [it] is such that *I am sure no man can reprove him of any sin;* howbeit, no man is innocent before God, which beholdeth the heart."[1] And in a noble outburst of Christian enthusiasm he thus replies to More's wish that the Reformers would keep their opinions secret:—"Until we see some means found by the which a reasonable Reformation may be had, *and sufficient instruction for the poor commoners*, I assure you I neither will nor can cease to speak; *for the Word of God boileth in my body like a fervent fire, and will needs have issue, and breaketh out when occasion is given. But this hath been offered you, is offered, and shall be offered:—Grant that the Word of God, I mean the text of Scripture, may go abroad in our English tongue, as other nations have it in their tongues, and my brother William Tyndale and I have done, and will promise you to write no more. If you will not grant this condition, then will we be doing while we have breath*, and show in few words that [what] the Scripture doth in many, and so at the least save some."[2]

With the increased amount of liberty enjoyed by Fryth in the new state of affairs, there was no serious difficulty in having his answer to More printed and circulated. Some of the good men with whom he was permitted to take counsel might easily contrive to transmit a copy of the work in manuscript to

[1] Fryth's *Answer to More*, fol. 196.

[2] *Ibid.*, fol. 156.

the Continent; and it has been conjectured that Tyndale himself superintended the passing of Fryth's book through the press. It is also believed that Tyndale still further aided his friend by himself issuing a defence of Fryth against the attack of Sir Thomas More.

On the 5th of April, 1533, there appeared from the press of "Nicolas Twonson of Nuremberg," a treatise entitled, "*The Supper of the Lord. . . .* wherein incidentally M. More's letter against John Fryth is confuted."[1] The work, indeed, was published anonymously, and was by some supposed to be that very treatise by George Joye of which Tyndale, in his letter to Fryth, had spoken in such disparaging terms. Others, however, ascribed the book to Tyndale; and Sir Thomas More, who immediately published a refutation of it, though admitting that the work was not characterised by the customary learning of Tyndale, and branding it as "blasphemous and bedlam-rife," yet proceeds to argue upon the assumption that Tyndale was really its author. Foxe has not printed it with the rest of Tyndale's writings, but speaks doubtfully of it as "a short and pithy treatise touching the Lord's Supper, compiled, as some do gather, by Tyndale, because the method and phrase agree with his, and the time of writing is concurrent." On the whole, however, it seems now agreed that the work was Tyndale's, this conviction being strengthened by the fact that Joye, whose self-conceit was boundless, does not claim the authorship of it, as he certainly would have done had the work been his.[2]

The treatise is, in reality, an exposition of the sixth chapter of St. John, and is not unworthy of Tyndale's acuteness as a controversialist; it retorts upon More with very great logical skill; and it exposes with very considerable force the absurdities and contradictions involved in the doctrine of transubstantia-

[1] Title and colophon of the original edition in the Bodleian.

[2] On the point, which is not devoid of interest, the reader is referred to the excellent prefatory remarks of Professor Walter in Tyndale's *Works*, Vol. III. pp. 218, etc., and three letters in *Notes and Queries*, First Series.

tion. To the ordinary modern reader, however, much the most interesting and characteristic part of the treatise is that in which Tyndale sketches his ideal of the proper manner of celebrating the holy ordinance of the Supper. We present it without note or comment to the judgment of the reader:—

"This holy sacrament therefore, would God it were restored unto the pure use, as the apostles used it in their time! Would God the secular princes, which should be the very pastors and head rulers of their congregations committed unto their cure, would first command or suffer the true preachers of God's Word to preach the Gospel purely and plainly, with discreet liberty, and constitute over each particular parish such curates as can and would preach the word, and that once or twice in the week, appointing unto their flock certain days, after their discretion and zeal to God-ward, to come together to celebrate the Lord's Supper! At the which assembly the curate would propone and declare them, first, this text of Paul, 1 Cor. xi.: 'So oft as ye shall eat this bread, and drink of this cup, see that ye be joyous, praise, and give thanks, preaching the death of the Lord,' etc.: which declared, and every one exhorted to prayer, he would preach them purely Christ to have died and been offered upon the altar of the cross for their redemption; which only oblation to be sufficient sacrifice, to peace the Father's wrath, and to purge all the sins of the world. Then to excite them with all humble diligence, every man unto the knowledge of himself and his sins, and to believe and trust to the forgiveness in Christ's blood; and for this so incomparable benefit of our redemption (which were sold bondmen to sin), to give thanks unto God the Father for so merciful a deliverance through the death of Jesus Christ, every one, some singing, and some saying devoutly, some or other psalm, or prayer of thanksgiving, in the mother tongue. Then, the bread and wine set before them, in the face of the Church, upon the table of the Lord, purely and honestly laid, let him declare to the people the significations of those sensible signs; what the action and deed moveth, teacheth, and exhorteth them unto; and that the bread and wine be no profane common signs, but holy sacraments, reverently to be considered, and received with a deep faith and remembrance of Christ's death, and of the shedding of His blood for our sins; those sensible things to represent us the very body and blood of Christ, so that while every man beholdeth with his corporal eye those sensible sacraments, the inward eye of his faith may see, and believe steadfastly, Christ offered and dying upon the cross for his sins, how His body was broken and His blood shed for us, and hath given Himself whole for us, Himself to be all ours, and whatsoever He did to serve us, as to be made for us, of His Father, our righteousness, our wisdom, holiness, redemption, satisfaction, etc.

"Then let this preacher exhort them lovingly to draw near unto this

table of the Lord, and that not only bodily, but also, their hearts purged by faith, garnished with love and innocency, every man to forgive each other unfeignedly, and to express, or at leastwise to endeavour them to follow, that love which Christ did set before our eyes at His last supper, when He offered Himself willingly to die for us His enemies; which incomparable love to commend, bring in Paul's arguments, so that thus this flock may come together, and be joined into one body, one spirit, and one people. This done, let him come down, and, accompanied honestly with other ministers, come forth reverently unto the Lord's table, the congregation now set round about it, and also in their other convenient seats, the pastor exhorting them all to pray for grace, faith, and love, which all this sacrament signifieth and putteth them in mind of. Then let there be read apertly and distinctly the sixth chapter of John, in their mother tongue; whereby they may clearly understand, what it is to eat Christ's flesh and to drink His blood. This done, and some brief prayer and praise sung or read, let one or other minister read the eleventh chapter of the first [Epistle] to the Corinthians, that the people might perceive clearly, of those words, the mystery of this Christ's supper, and wherefore He did institute it.

"These with such like preparations and exhortations had, I would every man present should profess the articles of our faith openly in our mother tongue, and confess his sins secretly unto God; praying entirely that He would now vouchsafe to have mercy upon him, receive his prayers, glue his heart unto Him by faith and love, increase his faith, give him grace to forgive and to love his neighbour as himself, to garnish his life with pureness and innocency, and to confirm him in all goodness and virtue. Then again it behoveth the curate to warn and exhort every man deeply to consider, and expend [*i.e.*, weigh] with himself, the signification and substance of this sacrament, so that he sit not down an hypocrite and a dissembler, since God is searcher of heart and reins, thoughts and affects, and see that he come not to the holy table of the Lord without that faith which he professed at his baptism, and also that love which the sacrament preacheth and testifieth unto his heart, lest he, now found guilty of the body and blood of the Lord (that is to wit, a dissembler with Christ's death, and slanderous to the congregation, the body and blood of Christ), receive his own damnation. And here let every man fall down upon his knees, saying secretly with all devotion their *Paternoster* in English; their curate, as example, kneeling down before them: which done, let him take the bread and eft [*i.e.*, after] the wine in the sight of the people, hearing him with a loud voice, with godly gravity, and after a Christian religious reverence, rehearsing distinctly the words of the Lord's Supper in their mother tongue; and then distribute it to the ministers, which, taking the bread with great reverence, will divide it to the congregation, every man breaking and reaching it forth to his next neighbour and member of the mystic body of Christ, other ministers following with the cups, pouring forth and

dealing them the wine, all together thus being now partakers of one bread and one cup, the thing thereby signified and preached printed fast in their hearts. But in this meanwhile must the minister or pastor be reading the communication that Christ had with His disciples after His supper, beginning at the washing of their feet; so reading till the bread and wine be eaten and drunken, and all the action done: and then let them fall down on their knees, giving thanks highly unto God the Father for this benefit and death of His Son, whereby now by faith every man is assured of remission of his sins; as this blessed sacrament had put them in mind, and preached it them in this outward action and supper. This done, let every man commend and give themselves whole to God, and depart."[1]

Before this treatise could have been conveyed to England for clandestine circulation, steps had been taken to bring Fryth to punishment. Dr. Curwin, one of the royal chaplains, availed himself of the opportunity of his officiating before Henry to inveigh against the leniency shown towards heretics who denied the teaching of the Church on the Sacraments, especially complaining that there was a prisoner in the town at that very moment, "so bold as to write in defence of that heresy, and yet no man goeth about his reformation." The process of "reformation," as it was facetiously styled by the courtly preacher, was not long delayed. Cranmer, Stokesley, Gardiner, with some others, were appointed to examine Fryth; who was, therefore, taken from the Tower to the Archbishop's Palace at Croydon. Two of Cranmer's household, a gentleman and a porter, accompanied him; and as they rowed from the Tower up the river to Lambeth, the gentleman entered into conversation with Fryth, and, doubtless at Cranmer's suggestion, advised him to yield a little in his opinions, and so escape the fate that threatened him. "This I am sure of," he urged, "that my Lord Cromwell, and my Lord of Canterbury, much favouring you, and knowing you to be an eloquent learned young man, and now towards the felicity of your life [*i.e.*, coming to the prime of life], young in years, old in knowledge, and of great forwardness, and likelihood to be a most profitable member of this realm, will

[1] Tyndale's *Works*, Vol. III. pp. 265, etc.

never permit you to sustain any open shame, *if you will somewhat be advised by their counsel:* on the other side, if you stand stiff to your opinion, it is not possible to save your life, for like as you have good friends, so have you mortal foes and enemies." Fryth was not insensible to the kindness thus exhibited, but he replied that he could not honestly conceal his opinions on the subject of the Lord's Supper, and that even if it should expose him to death, he must openly profess his belief in what he felt convinced was the true teaching of Scripture on that matter.

After a slight repast at Lambeth, Fryth and his two companions set out on foot for Croydon. Their route lay up Brixton Causeway, thick woods environing them on either hand; and the gentleman who had already shown himself so friendly proposed to the porter an extraordinary project for the escape of the prisoner. Fryth was to be permitted *per incuriam*, as it were, to wander into the woods which lay to the *left* of the road, and so escape into his native county, Kent, where he might find refuge till he could leave England; whilst they, after lingering, so as to allow him time to get free, were to spread the alarm that he had broken from them into the woods on the *right* of the road towards Wandsworth. Such a proposal, it may be assumed, would never have been made, but on the previous suggestion of Cranmer, who had been unwillingly dragged into the matter, and who, though by no means sharing in Fryth's opinions on the sacrament, was extremely reluctant to adopt any harsh measures against him. The plan was communicated to Fryth, but he refused to avail himself of it. In vain they reminded him of his danger, and urged him to use the opportunity which he would so gladly have welcomed some months before. "Before," he replied, "I was indeed desirous to escape, because I was not attached, but at liberty, which liberty I would fain have enjoyed (for the maintenance of my study beyond the sea, where I was reader in the Greek tongue), according to St. Paul's counsel. Howbeit *now*, being taken by the higher

powers, and, as it were, by Almighty God's permission and providence, delivered into the hands of the bishops, only for religion and doctrine's sake, such as in conscience, and under pain of damnation, I am bound to maintain and defend; if I should now start aside, and run away, I should run from my God, and from the testimony of His Holy Word—worthy, then, of a thousand hells. And, therefore, I most heartily thank you both, for your goodwill toward me, beseeching you to bring me where I was appointed to be brought, for else I will go thither all alone."

Such a man was not likely either to be awed by threats or cajoled by fair promises. He defended his opinions with great force and clearness; and his examiners were unable to drive him from his stronghold in the Scriptures and in St. Augustine. Cranmer, always gentle and loth to proceed to extremes, "sent for him three or four times, to persuade him to leave his imagination, but, for all that we could do therein, he would not apply to any counsel."[1] For Fryth, as for Cranmer, there was no escape; the opinions advocated were unquestionably heresy, according to the standard of truth then received; the law was plain, and the penalty was inevitable. Fryth was left to be dealt with by Stokesley, Longland, and Gardiner; and, although the last of these had been Fryth's tutor at Cambridge, and was favourably disposed towards him, there was no mercy to be expected from the others, who were veterans in persecution. The authority of the Church in England was felt to be trembling to its fall; but the name of heretic was still terrible, and no one dared to question the sentence which handed Fryth over to the temporal power to die the death of a heretic. The youthful martyr showed no sign of flinching from the dread ordeal; he repeated his opinions before the final tribunal clearly yet modestly; resolutely adhering to those points which seemed of essential consequence, expressing himself with caution on matters less clearly revealed.

[1] Cranmer's Letter to Archdeacon Hawkins: *Remains*, Letter 14.

Another young Kentishman, entrapped by the same traitor who had ensnared Fryth, perished with him at the same stake on the 4th of July. "And," says the old Martyrologist, "when he was tied unto the stake, there it sufficiently appeared with what constancy and courage he suffered death; for when the faggots and fire were put upon him, he willingly embraced the same, thereby declaring with what uprightness of mind he suffered his death for Christ's sake, and the true doctrine, whereof that day he gave, with his blood, a perfect and firm testimony; the wind made his death somewhat the longer, which bare away the flame from him unto his fellow, that was tied to his back: but he had established his mind with such patience, God giving him strength, that even as though he had felt no pain in that long torment, he seemed rather to rejoice for his fellow, than to be careful for himself."[1] A martyr so steadfast and resolute needed not any human sympathy to encourage him to stand fast; but Tyndale, learning the fresh danger which threatened his friend, wrote once again to comfort and strengthen him for the terrible trial which awaited him. It is exceedingly doubtful whether Tyndale's epistle ever reached Fryth; whether, in fact, Fryth had not been martyred before it was dispatched or even penned; but it is pervaded by the very spirit in which Fryth acted, and thus affords a most touching illustration of the perfect "like-mindedness" by which the two friends were animated. Foxe has entitled it, "A letter from William Tyndale, being in Antwerp, unto John Fryth, being prisoner in the Tower of London in England."

"The grace and peace of God our Father, and of Jesus Christ our Lord, be with you. Amen. Dearly beloved brother John, I have heard say that the hypocrites, now they have overçome that great business which letted them [*i.e.*, the royal divorce], or that now they have at the least way brought it at a stay, they return to their old nature again. The will of God be fulfilled, and that [what] He hath ordained

[1] Foxe, Vol. v. p. 15.

to be ere the world was made, that come, and His glory reign over all.

"Dearly beloved, howsoever the matter be, commit yourself wholly and only unto your most loving Father and most kind Lord, and fear not men that threat, nor trust men that speak fair: but trust Him that is true of promise, and able to make His word good. Your cause is Christ's Gospel, a light that must be fed with the blood of faith. The lamp must be dressed and snuffed daily, and that oil poured in every evening and morning, that the light go not out. Though we be sinners, yet is the cause right. If when we be buffeted for well-doing, we suffer patiently and endure, that is thankful with God; for to that end we are called. *For Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps, who did no sin. Hereby have we perceived love, that He laid down His life for us: therefore we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren. Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven. For we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Him.*

"Dearly beloved, be of good courage, and comfort your soul with the hope of this high reward, and bear the image of Christ in your mortal body, that it may at His coming be made like to His, immortal: and follow the example of all your other dear brethren, which chose to suffer in hope of a better resurrection. Keep your conscience pure and undefiled, and say against that nothing. Stick at [*i.e.*, resolutely maintain] necessary things; and remember the blasphemies of the enemies of Christ, 'They find none but that will abjure rather than suffer the extremity.' Moreover, the death of them that come again [*i.e.*, repent] after they have once denied, though it be accepted with God and all that believe, yet is it not glorious; for the hypocrites say, 'He must needs die; denying helpeth not: but might it have holpen, they

would have denied five hundred times: but seeing it would not help them, therefore of pure pride, and mere malice together, they speak with their mouths that [*i.e.*, what] their conscience knoweth false.' If you give yourself, cast yourself, yield yourself, commit yourself wholly and only to your loving Father; then shall His power be in you and make you strong, and that so strong, that you shall feel no pain, and [in?] that shall be to another present death: and His Spirit shall speak in you, and teach you what to answer, according to His promise. He shall set out His truth by you wonderfully, and work for you above all that your heart can imagine. Yea, and you are not yet dead; though the hypocrites all, with all they can make, have sworn your death. *Una salus victis nullam sperare salutem.* To look for no man's help bringeth the help of God to them that seem to be overcome in the eyes of the hypocrites: yea, it shall make God to carry you through thick and thin for His truth's sake, in spite of all the enemies of His truth. There falleth not a hair till His hour be come: and when His hour is come, necessity carrieth us hence, though we be not willing. But if we be willing, then have we a reward and thanks.

"Fear not threatening, therefore, neither be overcome of sweet words; with which twain the hypocrites shall assail you. Neither let the persuasions of worldly wisdom bear rule in your heart; no, though they be your friends that counsel. Let Bilney be a warning to you. Let not their vizor beguile your eyes. Let not your body faint. He that endureth to the end shall be saved. If the pain be above your strength, remember, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, I will give it you.' And pray to your Father in that name, and He will cease your pain, or shorten it. The Lord of peace, of hope, and of faith, be with you. Amen.

WILLIAM TYNDALE.

"Two have suffered in Antwerp, *in die Sanctæ Crucis* [September 14], unto the great glory of the Gospel: four

at Riselles[1], in Flanders: and at Luke hath there one at the least suffered all that same day. At Roan [*i.e.*, Rouen] in France they persecute; and at Paris are five Doctors taken for the Gospel. See, you are not alone. Be cheerful: and remember that among the hard-hearted in England there is a number reserved by grace: for whose sakes, if need be, you must be ready to suffer. Sir, if you may write, how short [soever] it be, forget it not; that we may know how it goeth with you, for our hearts' ease. The Lord be yet again with you, with all His plenteousness, and fill you that you flow over. Amen.

"If, when you have read this, you may send it to Adrian [or John Byrte], do, I pray you, that he may know how that our heart is with you.

"George Joye at Candlemas, being at Barrow, printed two leaves of Genesis in a great form, and sent one copy to the King, and another to the new Queen [Anne Boleyn], with a letter to N. for to deliver them; and to purchase licence, that he might so go through all the Bible. Out of that is sprung the noise of the new Bible [report that there was to be a new translation]; and out of that is the great seeking for English books at all printers and bookbinders in Antwerp, and for an English priest that should print [*i.e.*, that intended to print].

"This chanced the 9th day of May.

"Sir, your wife is well content with the will of God, and would not, for her sake, have the glory of God hindered.

"WILLIAM TYNDALE."

From the superscription of the letter, as well as from its contents, it seems certain that Tyndale, wherever he may have been wandering since Fryth left for England, had returned once again to his former abode at Antwerp. In the

[1] Editors have conjectured that by *Riselles, Brussels* is meant; and that *Luke* is the suburb of Brussels, now called *Laeken*: the very slightest inquiry would have informed them that Riselles is the Flemish name of *Lille*, as Luke is of *Liége*.

free cities of the German Empire, he, indeed, enjoyed a greater amount of personal security than in the Low Countries; but he was far removed from that land which was still his home, and in which all his interests were centred; and it was a tedious, an expensive, and an uncertain process to export his books from the heart of Germany to the shores of Britain. Charles V. had revenged himself for his reluctant toleration of the Protestants in Germany, by the infliction of unrelenting severities upon the unfortunate inhabitants of his hereditary domains. The Inquisition was in vigorous operation; and every district had its little army of martyrs;[1] the printing of heretical books was punished with extreme cruelty, and a universal system of espionage was established, by which it was hoped that heresy would be effectually rooted out. In spite of these serious drawbacks, Tyndale seems to have determined to take up his residence permanently in Antwerp. There he was near England, and in constant communication with home; and the privileges of the great centres of trade were sufficiently powerful and recognised by the Government, to secure him a very considerable amount of protection, so long as he acted with caution. Here, therefore, his wanderings ceased; yet a few more years, and he was to follow the brave example which his best-loved friend had set, and to die as intrepidly as Fryth had died.

[1] See Brandt, *Reformation in the Low Countries;* Crespin, *Histoire des Martyrs;* Henné, *Histoire du Regne de Charles-Quint en Belgique.*

CHAPTER XII.

TYNDALE'S LIFE AT ANTWERP: REVISION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT: CONTROVERSY WITH GEORGE JOYE: SEIZED.

A.D. 1533—1535.

FOR nearly two years Tyndale seems to have remained quietly in Antwerp, watching the progress of events in his native land, busily engaged in literary labours, and filling up the intervals of leisure with that simple routine of holy and useful living which Foxe has so beautifully described, from the information of the merchant with whom Tyndale chiefly resided.

"He was," says Foxe, "a man very frugal and spare of body, a great student, an earnest labourer in the setting forth of the Scriptures of God. He reserved or hallowed to himself two days in the week, which he named his pastime, Monday and Saturday. On Monday he visited all such poor men and women as were fled out of England, by reason of persecution, into Antwerp; and these, once well understanding their good exercises and qualities, he did very liberally comfort and relieve; and in like manner provided for the sick and diseased persons. On the Saturday he walked round about the town, seeking every corner and hole where he suspected any poor person to dwell; and where he found any to be well occupied, and yet over-burdened with children, or else were aged and weak, these also he plentifully relieved. And thus he spent his two days of pastime, as he called them. And truly his alms were very large, and so they might well be; for his

exhibition that he had yearly of the English merchants at Antwerp, when living there, was considerable; and that, for the most part, he bestowed upon the poor. The rest of the days of the week he gave wholly to his book, wherein he most diligently travailed. When the Sunday came, then went he to some one merchant's chamber or other, whither came many other merchants, and unto them would he read some one parcel of Scripture: the which proceeded so fruitfully, sweetly, and gently from him, much like to the writing of John the Evangelist, that it was a heavenly comfort and joy to the audience to hear him read the Scriptures; likewise, after dinner, he spent an hour in the same manner. He was a man without any spot or blemish of rancour or malice, full of mercy and compassion, so that no man living was able to reprove him of any sin or crime; although his righteousness and justification depended not thereupon before God, but only upon the blood of Christ, and his faith upon the same."

It is evident from these words of the Martyrologist, that the vague assertion so frequently hazarded, that Tyndale was the chaplain of the merchant adventurers in Antwerp, is quite without foundation. Many of the merchants were undoubtedly favourable to the doctrines of the Reformation; but at that time it was simply impossible that any person who had taken a prominent part in propagating the opinions of the Reformers could hold the office of chaplain. Lambert, whose opinions were far less developed than those of Tyndale, had, as we have seen, been taken before Sir Thomas More on the charge of heresy; and it is quite evident that Tyndale did not conduct any religious services in Antwerp in an official capacity. Not improbably, indeed, for a considerable period of his exile, Tyndale had never known the happiness of publicly joining in the worship of God; "He sayeth no service at all," Sir Thomas More has asserted, "neither matins, evensong, nor mass, nor cometh at no church but either to gaze or talk;"[1] and, making due allowance for

[1] *Confutation*, p. 415.

The Newe Testa-
ment in Engly[illegible] translated
after the [illegible]
ninge th[illegible].

The Gospels

Mathew. Luke.
Marke. Jhon.

The actes of the Apostles.

The Epistles of S. Paul.

To the Romaynes
The . I. Corinthians
The . II. Corinthians
To the Galathians
To the Ephesians
To the Philippians
To the Collossians
The . I. Tessalonians
The . II. Tessalonians
The . I. Tymothe.
The . II. Tymothe.
To Titus.
To Phylemon.
To the Hebrues.

The Epistle of S. James

The . I. of S. Peter
The . II. of S. Peter
The Epistle of S. Jude
The . I. of S. John.
The . II. of S. John.
The . III. of S. John.

The reuelacion of S. Jhon.

The Epistles taken out of the olde Testament.

Anno . 1532 .

controversial bitterness, the charge is probably in the main true. The Roman Catholic worship he was not likely to attend; in Antwerp, no other was tolerated; and Tyndale's ministrations were evidently nothing more than a species of family devotional service.

Another popular error on this point may also be here rectified. It has been taken for granted that John Rogers, the proto-martyr of the Marian persecution, immediately succeeded Lambert as chaplain at Antwerp, that he was therefore contemporary with Tyndale for some years in that city, and that he was a man entirely kindred in his opinions to the illustrious Translator. The truth is, however, that Rogers held a living in London till the month of October, 1534; and when he came to Antwerp as chaplain he was almost certainly no adherent of the cause of the Reformers; but, as even Foxe has remarked, "performed the sacred offices after the common custom of the idolaters [*i.e.*, the Romanists] of the time."[1] Rogers could only have known Tyndale for a few months before his imprisonment; but this brief acquaintance sufficed to make a deep impression on his mind. He seems to have succeeded in part to the place which Fryth had previously occupied; he assisted Tyndale in his literary labours; and to him was bequeathed, according to a tradition that has never been disputed, the honour of completing that great work to which Tyndale had consecrated his life.

Vaughan also was again in Antwerp, and to his correspondence we are once more indebted for some not uninteresting gossip concerning Tyndale and other refugees. He informs us, among other curious details, that Sir Thomas More, who had then fallen into disgrace, had sent "oftentimes and lately to Antwerp," books to be distributed there, including his *Confutation of Tyndale*, and his *Answer to Fryth*, so anxious was the ex-Chancellor that his works should find readers.[2] Again, he informs Cromwell that it was reported in

[1] See *Life of Rogers*, by Lemuel Chester.

[2] *State Papers*, Vol. VII. p. 489. Vaughan to Cromwell, August 3.

Antwerp that Tyndale had been requested by the party in England opposed to the royal divorce to correct a treatise which had been composed against Henry's marriage with Anne Boleyn, but that he "refused to do so, saying that he would no farther meddle in his Prince's matter, nor would move his people against him, since it [the marriage] was done:"[1] so that Tyndale had probably begun to perceive that his opinions on the royal divorce had brought him into intercourse with strange companions.

After his settlement at Antwerp, Tyndale seems to have returned with all his energy to his great work of completing and perfecting his translation of Holy Scripture. For some time he had allowed himself to be withdrawn to other labours, which appeared to him indispensable; but, fortunately, his true work again occupied him in these last few months of his life.

In 1534, he reissued the Pentateuch, with some slight changes in the Book of Genesis, in the Prefaces, and in the appended explanatory tables; his engagements probably not allowing a more thorough revision at that time.

The great work of the year 1534, however, was the entire revision of his New Testament, and the issue of a second edition, which has been, not inappropriately, styled "Tyndale's noblest monument." Since the first printing of the work at Worms it had been frequently reproduced, but never under Tyndale's superintendence. The original edition had been reprinted, but without any attempt to introduce any of those corrections which Tyndale had promised in his "Preface to the Reader," in his first issue; indeed, so far from being improved in these subsequent reprints, innumerable errors had been permitted to creep in from the ignorance of the foreign printers.

The history of the English Bible between the years 1526 and 1534 is still so badly ascertained that it cannot be given in detail; but on the whole we may accept, as probably

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. VII. p. 516. October 21.

coming near to the truth, the abstract given by one who has already been several times mentioned, and who will occupy a prominent place in this chapter—George Joye.

"Thou shalt know that Tyndale, about eight or nine years ago [Joye is writing in December, 1534, or January, 1535], translated and printed the New Testament in a mean great volume [he means the octavo at Worms], but yet without Kalendar, Concordances in the margin, and Table in the end. And anon after, the Dutchmen got a copy, and printed it again in a small volume, adding the Kalendar in the beginning, Concordances [*i.e.*, parallel passages] in the margin, and the Table in the end. But yet for that they had no Englishman to correct the setting, they themselves, having not the knowledge of our tongue, were compelled to make many more faults than were in the copy, and so corrupted the book that the simple reader might ofttimes be tarried and stick. After this they printed it again, also without a corrector, in a greater letter and volume, with the figures [woodcuts] in the Apocalypse, which was therefore much falser than their first. When these two prints (there were of them both about five thousand books printed), were all sold more than a twelvemonth ago,[1] Tyndale was pricked forth to take the Testament in hand, to print it and correct it as he professeth and promiseth to do in the latter end of his first translation. But Tyndale prolonged and deferred so necessary a thing and so just desires of many men: in so much that in the mean season the Dutchmen printed it again the third time in a small volume like their first print, but much more false than ever it was before. And yet was Tyndale here called upon again, seeing there were so many false printed books still put forth, and bought up so fast; for now was there given, thanked be God, a little space to breathe and rest unto Christ's Church, after so long and grievous persecution for reading the books [*i.e.*, probably after

[1] Joye, who left England in December, 1527, had remained at Strasburg till about 1532, and therefore could only know some of those facts from hearsay; it seems strange, however, that he had never heard of the Cologne quarto, which had Concordances.

the legislation of March, 1534]. But yet before this third time of printing the book, the printer desired me to correct it; and I said, 'It were well done, if ye printed them again, to make them truer, and not to deceive our nation with any more false books; nevertheless, I suppose that Tyndale himself will put it forth more perfect and newly corrected, which if he do, yours shall be nought set by, nor never sold.' This notwithstanding yet they printed them, and that most false, and about two thousand books, *and had shortly sold them all.* All this long while Tyndale slept, for nothing came from him, as far as I could perceive. Then the Dutch began to print them the fourth time, because they saw no man else going about them; and after they had printed the first leaf, which copy another Englishman had corrected to them, they came to me and desired me to correct them their copies; when I answered as before, that, 'if Tyndale amend it, with so great diligence as he promiseth, yours will be never sold.' 'Yes,' quod they, 'for if he print two thousand, and we as many, what is so little a number for all England? and we will sell ours better cheap, and therefore we doubt not of the sale.' So that I perceived well and was sure that whether I had corrected their copy or not, they had gone forth with their work, and had given us two thousand more books falselier printed than ever we had before. Then I thus considered with myself, England hath enough and too many false Testaments, and is now likely to have many more; yea, and that whether Tyndale correct his or no, yet shall these, now in hand, go forth uncorrected too, except somebody correct them; and what Tyndale doth I wot not, he maketh me nothing of his counsel; I see nothing come from him all this long while, wherein, with the help that he hath, that is to say, one both to write it and to correct it in the press, he might have done it thrice since he was moved to do it. For Tyndale I know well was not able to do it without such an helper, which he hath ever had hitherto."[1]

[1] Joye's *Apology*, Arber's Reprint, pp. 20–22.

In short, Joye, at the urgent request of the printer, who was the widow of Christopher of Endhoven, undertook to correct the press for the extremely moderate remuneration of fourpence-halfpenny sterling for every sheet of sixteen leaves. It is probable, it is in fact certain, that Joye has omitted, through ignorance, some of the early surreptitious reprints of Tyndale's New Testament; but from his statement it is evident that besides Tyndale's own editions, four others had been issued previous to that which Tyndale himself revised in November, 1534. Unfortunately, these surreptitious editions have not been identified;[1] but we are probably not exaggerating when we suppose that on the average, every year since its first issue, a new edition had been printed and circulated in England. And it must be remembered that these editions were all reprints of the octavo of Worms, and that they were therefore without note or comment, containing simply the text of Holy Scripture in English, with references in the margin to parallel passages.

Some writers, anxious to find excuses for the authorities who prohibited the Bible and punished those that read it, allege that it contained offensive notes, which no authority, lay or clerical, could be expected to tolerate; but this is a total delusion, a defence of ancient bigotry by modern ignorance. It must not be forgotten, that what was prohibited, what was condemned, what was burnt, was the simple text of Holy Scripture, without any note, or comment, or prologue of any kind whatsoever.[2] The Bible-burners of the sixteenth century would have repudiated with indignation the motives which *candid* moderns have been kind enough to invent for them. In their judgment the whole question was entirely free from those complications which modern refinement has introduced; and

[1] They are scattered about, if they exist at all, in cathedral libraries and other collections not easy of access. In such places, books of this kind are practically lost, (some of them have in fact disappeared); and it is a great pity that they are not placed under proper charge in some accessible position.

[2] I except, of course, the edition of 1530, in which it is supposed that the Prologue to the Romans was inserted.

they pronounce their opinion with a plainness which at once supersedes all doubt.

"The New Testament translated into the vulgar tongue," says one of the chief opponents of the Reformers, "is in truth the food of death, the fuel of sin, the vail of malice, the pretext of false liberty, the protection of disobedience, the corruption of discipline, the depravity of morals, the termination of concord, the death of honesty, the well-spring of vices, the disease of virtues, the instigation of rebellion, the milk of pride, the nourishment of contempt, the death of peace, the destruction of charity, the enemy of unity, the murderer of truth!"[1] That men who cherished such sentiments as these should proscribe and burn the Bible in the native tongue, was as natural as that men who dread contagion should burn all infected garments.

The narrative of Joye, which we have just quoted, was intended as a sort of explanation and defence of his conduct in issuing a revised reprint of Tyndale's New Testament, although he was well aware that Tyndale himself had for some time been occupied in a careful revision and correction of his own work. Joye, indeed, took care not to connect Tyndale's name with his edition; but it was undeniably little more than a reprint of Tyndale's, with a few changes introduced. These, moreover, were made without any attempt to confer the translation with the original Greek, a task for which Joye's scholarship was wholly inadequate. He himself acknowledges that he merely "mended" any words that he found falsely printed, and that when he "came to some dark sentences that no reason could be gathered of them, whether it was by the

[1] The passage is worth quoting in the original Latin, as a *tour de force* of rhetoric: "Novum Testamentum, a Luthero in patriam linguam traductum, vere pabulum est mortis, fomes peccati, velamen malitiæ, prætextus falsæ libertatis, inobedientiæ præsidium, disciplinæ corruptio, morum depravatio, concordiæ dissipatio, honestatis interitus, vitiorum scaturigo, virtutum lues, rebellionis incendium, superbiæ lac, esca contemptûs, pacis mors, charitatis peremptio, unitatis hostis, veritatis perduellio." Cochloeus' *An licet Laicis*, etc., signature B. iv.

ignorance of the first translator or of the printers," he had "the Latin text" by him, and "made it plain." In fact, the work had no pretension whatever to be considered an original production, and was simply such a plagiarism as any modern laws of copyright would interdict or punish. It was ushered into the world with a pompous and affected title; "The New Testament as it was written and caused to be written by them which heard it, whom also our Saviour Christ Jesus commanded that they should preach it unto all creatures;" and the colophon paraded it as "diligently over-seen and corrected." Not much diligence, however, could be expected for fourpence-halfpenny a sheet; and although the printers did their part well (for the work is got up with remarkable neatness), Joye's diligence seems to have been in proportion to the smallness of his remuneration.[1]

The changes which he has introduced are few in number, of the very smallest possible consequence, never in any case suggested by the original Greek, and probably not in a single instance effecting any improvement either in the accuracy or the clearness of the version which he thus presumed to correct. In the three chapters of St. Matthew, for example, which contain the Sermon on the Mount, he only ventures to make *eight* changes: in two of them he is certainly wrong; in a third he has mistaken the meaning of Tyndale; in a fourth he has misunderstood the sense of the original; a fifth is a permissible variation in the rendering of a participle; and the remaining three are grammatical trifles, such as the substitution of *shall* for *will*, *into* for *to*. This may probably be taken as a fair specimen of Joye's work, which scarcely aspires beyond the province of an ordinary corrector of the press, and, except in one respect, was, with all its pretensions, simply a barefaced reprint of Tyndale's Testament.[2]

[1] Only one copy is known to be in existence, that in the Grenville Library in the British Museum.

[2] In St. Matthew vi. 24, Tyndale's New Testament had by mistake the words, "or else he will *lene* the one and despise the other," which Joye could make

One change, however, and that not unimportant, Joye did venture with most intolerable arrogance to introduce. In his intercourse with Tyndale there had been frequent discussions on an abstruse doctrinal question much controverted in the Christian Church,—the condition of the souls of the dead between death and judgment. In his controversy with Sir Thomas More, Tyndale had asserted, or, at least, had admitted, that "the souls of the dead lie and sleep till Doomsday," whereas Joye maintained, in common perhaps with most members of the Church, Reformed or un-Reformed, that at death the souls passed not into sleep, but into a higher and better life. On this point, according to Joye's own narrative, he and Tyndale had frequently been engaged in rather sharp discussions; and he complains that Tyndale had repeatedly treated him in a somewhat abrupt and uncourteous fashion, upbraiding him with his want of scholarship, and ridiculing his arguments, "filliping them forth," as he alleges, "between his finger and his thumb after his wonted disdainful manner." Full of this doctrinal controversy, Joye believed that Tyndale had obscured the meaning of Scripture in several passages by the use of the term *resurrection*, where it was not the resurrection of the body that was really intended; and he therefore in his revision struck out the term, and substituted for it the phrase, "life after this," which was more in accordance with his own opinions.

A single specimen will show more clearly than any description the nature of the change thus effected; and the matter is of so much consequence in the personal history of Tyndale, that it is necessary to understand it accurately. The words of our Lord (St. Matthew xxii. 30, 31), rendered in our Authorised Version, after Tyndale, "in the *resurrection* they neither marry

nothing of, and so, conjecturally, he printed, "he will *love* the one," etc. In Tyndale's own revision the error is of course rectified, "he will *lean* to the one." I do not pretend to have collated all Joye's book; but after examining several passages in the Gospels and the Epistles, I am satisfied that the estimate in the text is a correct one. Westcott gives an excellent account of it: *History of the English Bible*, p. 57.

his drother. Lykewyse the seconde ād the thyrd/vnto the seuenthe Laste of all the woman dyed also. Nowe in the lyfe after this/whose wyfe shal she be of the.vij: for all had her. Jesus answered ād sayde vnto thē: ye are deceaued ād knowe not what the scripture meaneth/nor yet the vertue of god: For in the lyfe after thys/they nether mary/nor are maryed: but are as the aūgels of god in heauen.

As touchynge the lyfe of them that be deed: haue ye not redde what is sayde vnto you of god/which sayeth I am Abrahams God/ and Jsaaks God/and the God of Jacob: God ys not the god of the deed: but of the lynynge. And when the people herde that/they were astonyed at hys doctryne. Exo.iiij.d

D ✠ When the pharises had herde howe that he had put the sadduces to silence/they drewe to geder/ād won of thē whych was a doctour off lawe asked him a questiō temptinge him & saynge Master which is the gret commaundmēt in the lawe? Jesus sayde vnto him thou shalt loue thy lorde God with all thy ae herte/wyth all thy soule/& with all thy mynde: This is the first ād that gret cōmaundment: And there is another like vnto this Thou shalt loue thy ne neghbour as thy selfe. In these two mar.xij.c. Luc.xij.e Deu.vj.a. Leu.xix.b Mar.xij.c

nor are given in marriage . . . as touching the *resurrection* of the dead, have ye not read?" etc., are translated by Joye, "in *the life after this* they neither marry"—and "*as touching the life of them that be dead*," etc. Joye did not, as has been sometimes said, discard the word resurrection altogether, neither did he intend to express any doubt as to the doctrine of the resurrection of the body; but he confined the use of the word to those instances in which it was unquestionably the resurrection of the body that was intended (*e.g.*, Acts i. 22); and in all other cases, in order, as he supposed, to avoid instilling prejudices into the minds of the unwary readers, he employed such circumlocutions as "the life after this" or "the very life."

The doctrinal controversy thus raised does not fall within the province of our biography; but some knowledge of the facts involved is indispensable at this period of Tyndale's life, all the more so, as they have been very considerably misrepresented by some previous writers.[1]

From what has just been written the reader will be prepared to anticipate the indignation which Joye's proceedings excited in the mind of Tyndale. For many months he had been engaged in a most elaborate revision of his New Testament, which must have cost nearly as much labour as the original translation; and now, just as his work was ready for the press, Joye's edition appeared. Not only was the real author of the translation thereby threatened with the loss of the fruit of his long and weary labours; not only was he dishonestly defrauded by the employment of his own previous toil against himself; but, to add insult to injury, he saw his translation tampered with by Joye, so as to give countenance to what he had often condemned as the mere "curious speculation" of a stupid and ignorant man. Beyond all question Joye had acted dishonourably; he had injured and insulted Tyndale; and no human patience could have

[1] I am no admirer of Joye, but I cannot help protesting against the treatment he has received from Anderson.

submitted unmoved to his proceedings. Tyndale felt keenly the injury that had been done; he gave vent to his indignation in bitter and reproachful terms; and a personal controversy was thus excited, which was not appeased even at the time of his apprehension.

But before entering upon the narrative of this personal dispute, the work of Tyndale deserves a more detailed notice. Tyndale's first version had been made under considerable difficulties, as we have formerly seen; and he was himself aware that it was susceptible of many improvements. Not only might the text be improved by more accurate, more clear, or more concise, renderings; but, in his own estimation, it was desirable to give the work completeness by separate introductions to each of the books, and by greater attention to the marginal glosses, with which, as with a brief commentary, it was equipped. All this was accomplished with great pains in the edition of 1534. He had diligently gone over the whole of his translation, not only comparing it once again with the Greek text of Erasmus, but bringing to bear upon it that enlarged experience of Hebrew which he had acquired in his translation of the Old Testament, and which he now saw to be of no small service in illustrating the Hellenistic of the New. In his "Epistle to the Reader," he states the general principles on which he proceeded, and they are not unworthy of consideration.

"Here hast thou, most dear reader, the New Testament or covenant made with us of God in Christ's blood, which I have looked over again, now at the last, with all diligence, and compared it unto the Greek, and have weeded out of it many faults, which lack of help at the beginning, and oversight, did sow therein. If aught seem changed, or not altogether agreeing with the Greek, let the finder of the fault consider the Hebrew phrase or manner of speech left in the Greek words; whose preterperfect tense and present tense is often both one, and the future tense is the optative mood also, and the future tense oft the imperative mood in the

active voice, and in the passive ever. Likewise person for person, number for number, and an interrogation for a conditional, and such like, is with the Hebrews a common usage.[1] I have also in many places set light in the margin to understand the text by. If any man find faults either with the translation or aught beside (*which is easier for many to do than so well to have translated it themselves of their own pregnant wits at the beginning, without an ensample*), to the same it shall be lawful to translate it themselves, and to put what they lust thereto. If I shall perceive, either by myself or by the information of other, that aught be escaped me, or might more plainly be translated, I will shortly after cause it to be mended. Howbeit, in many places methinketh it better to put a declaration in the margin, than to run too far from the text. And in many places, where the text seemeth at the first chop hard to be understood, yet the circumstances before and after, and often reading together, make it plain enough."

The diligent correction promised in these words was faithfully and laboriously carried out, in such a manner as amply to justify the declaration of the title-page, that it was "corrected and compared with the Greek."[2] The corrections introduced may be reckoned by thousands, and in the great majority of cases their obvious tendency is to bring the English version into closer correspondence with the Greek original. Tyndale's scholarship comes out in very marked contrast with the carelessness and ignorance of his rival. In the Sermon on the Mount, as we have just seen, Joye introduced eight changes in all, half of them mistakes, and none of them improvements; Tyndale has made no fewer than

[1] And yet this is the person who is supposed not to have known anything about Hebrew!

[2] The title is as follows:—"The New Testament diligently corrected and compared with the Greek, by William Tyndale, and finished in the year of our Lord God, 1534, in the month of November." It was printed by Martin Lempereur, in Antwerp; Joye's, by the widow of Christopher of Endhoven, in Antwerp.

fifty-one changes in the same chapters, the merit of which is sufficiently indicated by the fact that, after several subsequent revisions, many of them still exist in our Authorised Version.

A specimen of Tyndale's "revision and correction" will make palpable to the reader the enormous difference between his well-considered alterations and Joye's trifling and heedless changes. In St. Matthew v. 13, the original version of 1525 had run as follows:—"Ye are the salt of the earth, but and if the salt be once unsavoury, what can be salted therewith? it is therefore good for nothing but to be cast out at the doors, and that men tread it under feet."

In Tyndale's revision of 1534, it is thus amended, and brought nearer to the Greek:—"Ye are the salt of the earth, but and if *the salt have lost her saltness*, what can be salted therewith?[1] It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out *and to be trodden under foot of men.*"

Again, in verse 16, the previous reading, "See that your light so shine before men," is changed into the more literal and more beautiful, "Let your light so shine before men." And similarly in the succeeding verse the incorrect rendering, "Ye shall not think that I am come to destroy the law," is more accurately translated, "Think not that I am come;" and the phrase, "Heavenly Father," in verses 45 and 48 of the old rendering, is replaced by the more euphonious as well as more accurate, "Father which is in heaven."

In the sixth chapter, the first translation had omitted the Doxology at the end of the Lord's Prayer; the revised version, founding upon a collation of other printed texts, has inserted it; and several minor improvements are also introduced; thus, *e.g.*, "Consider the lilies" for "behold the lilies;" "what ye shall put on" for "what raiment ye shall wear." And in the seventh chapter, among other

[1] On this reading see any critical edition of the New Testament.

alterations, he effected a considerable improvement in the force of the last words of the sermon, by bringing the English into closer approximation to the Greek: "It was *overthrown,* and great was the fall of it," had been the version of 1525; for which Tyndale now substituted the simple rendering which we now use, and which retains the rhetorical figure of the original: "and it *fell,* and great was the *fall* thereof."

These changes may be taken as a specimen of the revision to which Tyndale submitted his former translation; and only those who have some slight acquaintance with the difficulties that beset the revision of a finished work can fully appreciate the amount of care and labour which Tyndale must have bestowed upon his task. In the vast majority of instances his changes are obvious improvements; they give clearness to what was previously obscure, or force to what was formerly weak and pointless; they improve the melody and rhythm of the sentence; or, above all, they bring the English into more exact grammatical and verbal conformity with the original. Revision is a difficult and delicate task; seldom undertaken by the writers to whom we owe the original, and seldom ably performed by any other. Tyndale is great in both capacities; he translated with unequalled felicity; he revised with unrivalled success; he has shown his countrymen both the true spirit in which the Holy Scriptures may be worthily rendered into English, and the true method by which that translation may be gradually improved and perfected.

A more complete examination of the revised edition of 1534 would only confirm the verdict that has now been pronounced. A highly-competent authority has ascertained, *e.g.*, that *thirty-one* changes have been introduced into the translation of the First Epistle of St. John; "of these about a third are *closer approximations to the Greek;* rather more are variations in connecting particles or the like, *designed to bring out the argument of the original more clearly; three new readings are adopted;* and in one passage it appears that Luther's

rendering has been substituted for an awkward paraphrase; yet it must be remarked that even in this revision the changes are far more frequently at variance with Luther's renderings than in accordance with them."[1]

The New Testament of 1534, besides being carefully revised in the translation, contains Prologues to all the Books except the Acts and the Apocalypse. These have to a considerable extent been translated from the German of Luther; although, with his characteristic independence, Tyndale in no case confines himself to the mere functions of a mechanical translator. In general, he condenses and abridges Luther's works; but in some cases he writes in direct opposition to his great prototype; and he is always careful to avoid that sweeping and unconditional recklessness of assertion, which makes the works of Luther sometimes stumbling-blocks to friends as well as to enemies. His Prologues to Hebrews and to James are, in the main, an argument against the opinions of Luther, who, as is well known, had treated both these books as not entitled to Apostolic authority; and after carefully examining all Luther's reasons, Tyndale concludes, in direct opposition to Luther, that they ought "no more to be refused for holy, godly, and Catholic than the other authentic Scriptures," but "ought of right to be taken for Holy Scripture."[2]

In addition, moreover, to these Prologues, which, with one exception, had all been specially prepared for this revised Testament, Tyndale furnished his work with marginal glosses, intended to throw light upon the text, and to guide the reader to its true meaning and its moral lessons. From the destruction of the original quarto of Cologne, which was also, as the reader will remember, supplied with these marginal comments, it is not possible for us to assert definitely, how far these glosses were composed for the revised edition of

[1] Westcott, p. 185, and Appendix iii. Tyndale has also indicated the passage (1 John v. 7), which is now generally considered spurious, by printing it in smaller type and in brackets.

[2] Westcott has examined the whole matter with admirable care; pp. 157–203.

1534, or how far they were mere reprints of those which had previously appeared. If we may judge, however, from an examination of the fragment of the first quarto which remains, it would seem probable that nearly the whole of the glosses were rewritten for the occasion. They are less polemical, and more strictly expository than those which had been originally appended to the New Testament by Tyndale; and it will be generally admitted that this dissociation of the Word of God from the expression of human indignation is a vast improvement. They are wonderfully terse, without any affectation of rhetorical antithesis; and they are as favourable specimens of "pregnant and pithy comments" as the English language contains.

Thus on Christ's announcement of His death following immediately after that confession of St. Peter, which He had so highly praised, he remarks, "When aught is said or done that should move to pride, He dasheth them in the teeth with His death and passion." What an admirable definition of *strong* is that contained in the comment on Romans xv. i.: "He is strong that can bear another man's weakness!" How truly does he catch the spirit of the Apostle's advice to the Corinthians on marriage, "If a man have the gift, chastity is good, the more quietly to serve God; for the married have oft much trouble; but if the mind of the chaste be cumbered with other worldly business, what helpeth it? and if the married be the more quick-minded thereby, what hurteth it? Neither, of itself, is better than the other." Occasionally, the gloss is merely a species of catch-word placed in the margin, indicating the subject treated of; and sometimes it is simply explanatory, as when he notes that by "a penny is always to be understood a sum of money equal to sevenpence amongst us." Polemical notes are not entirely omitted, but the sting of them seems to have been deprived of its poison, as the former bitterness of expression is considerably modified. Thus, on St. Paul's advice to the Thessalonians, "That ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with

your own hands," he remarks simply, "a good lesson for monks and idle friars."[1]

The Prologues and glosses do not exhaust the whole of Tyndale's additions to the text of the New Testament. At the close of the work he has added a translation of the "Epistles taken out of the Old Testament, which are read in the Church after the Use of Salisbury," on certain Saints' Days and other occasions. These included not only extracts from the books of the Pentateuch which he had already translated, but also from many of the other parts of the Old Testament, from Proverbs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Joel, Hosea, Amos, Zechariah, and Malachi; as well as from the Apocryphal books of Esdras, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus.[2]

In fact, the New Testament of 1534 was an approximation

[1] I join my regret to that of Westcott that these glosses, along with those on the *Pentateuch*, were not included in the Parker Society Edition of Tyndale's *Works*. The Editor has done his work in a most creditable manner, but it is unfortunate that he has omitted writings so characteristic, and on which Tyndale had evidently bestowed so much labour; all the more so as it is extremely improbable, considering the enormous depreciation of the value of the Parker Society's publications, that any new edition of Tyndale's *Works* will be issued for many years. In the present case the Editor's omission of these glosses has been attended by a curious result, which shows how important it is that the whole of an author's writings should be comprised in what professes to be a complete edition of his *Works*. Mr. Chester, in his *Life of Rogers*, claims for that distinguished martyr the honour of being the first *Commentator* on Holy Scripture of the English Protestant Church. And in support of this claim he asserts (p. 48, note), "After his most zealous exertions, Professor Walter could collect together only about nine octavo pages of Tyndale's *Annotations*, while those of Rogers would fill a considerable volume; moreover, those few notes of Tyndale appear to have had little or no circulation, and it will be seen by examination that Rogers retained very few of them." All this, it is evident, is mere misconception, arising chiefly from Professor Walter's omission to print the glosses in the New Testament of 1534 and in the Pentateuch, which would fill a considerable volume: but proceeding, also, in part from Mr. Chester failing to perceive that the *nine octavo pages* were not the *whole* even of Tyndale's glosses on his first Testament, but only all that exist in the few leaves which constitute the Grenville fragment; a misapprehension which is unaccountable in one so exact and painstaking as I know my friend Lemuel Chester to be. I omit altogether the question, evidently a most important one, whether those notes of Rogers on which the claim depends, may not have been as much Tyndale's as the translation which they accompanied.

[2] Westcott has given a complete list of these Epistles. Anderson has, not very honestly, suppressed all notice of the Apocrypha.

The.xiiii fygure.

are with outē spott before the trone of god. K

And I sawe an angell flye in the myddes of heven havynge an everlastynge gospell/ to preache vnto them that sytt and dwell on thē erth/and to all nacions/kinreddes/and tongē and people sayinge with a lowde voyce: Feare God and geve honour to him/for the houre of his iudgement is come: and worshyppe him/ that made heven and erth/ & the see/and foun-

psal. xlv
act. xiiij.

taynes

to the familiar *Church Service* of the modern church-goer; and seemed to point to the possibility of the same use in public as well as in private religious worship. Tyndale's hopes were beginning to rise after long years of toil and danger, and the sky was brightening with the promise of the coming day. For eight years it had been a crime in any Englishman to sell, to purchase, or to read a copy of the New Testament in his native tongue; now, in God's providence, the persecution had died down; men might even dare to possess the English Bible and read it in private, and Tyndale seems to have anticipated the possibility of its being publicly read in church for the edification of the people.

This, too, was closer at hand than most men believed. For in England events were moving with the speed of a revolution. The papal supremacy was formally abolished by Act of Parliament; the laws against heretics were relaxed; More and Fisher were in the Tower; Anne Boleyn was supreme in the king's affections, and had very recently used her authority to intervene for the protection of an English merchant who had been involved in trouble in Antwerp by his zeal for the circulation of the New Testament. Anne's theological convictions may not have been very profound or very enlightened; but there is no doubt of her favourable inclination towards the Reformers; and her letter to Cromwell on this subject is worth preserving, as the first official recognition extended by those in authority to men who had been for years hunted as outlaws.

"Anne the Queen: Trusty and right well-beloved, we greet you well; and whereas we be credibly informed, that the bearer hereof, Richard Herman, merchant and citizen of Antwerp, in Brabant, was in the time of the late lord cardinal put and expelled from his freedom and fellowship of and in the English House there, for nothing else, as he affirmeth, but only for that he did, both with his goods and policy, to his great hurt and hindrance in this world, *help to the setting forth of the New Testament in English:* we therefore

desire and instantly pray you, that with all speed and favour convenient, ye will cause this good and honest merchant, being my Lord's true, faithful, and loving subject, to be restored to his pristine freedom, liberty, and fellowship aforesaid, and the sooner at this our request, and at your good leisure, to hear him in such things as he hath to make further relation unto you in this behalf: Given, under our signet, at my Lord's Manor of Greenwich, the 14th day of May."[1]

Time was bringing about its revenge; the day had gone past when a merchant might be seized, and his goods confiscated, for no other crime than his contributing to print the Word of God in English; and the company of merchant adventurers in Antwerp were doubtless remonstrated with by Cromwell in such a manner as speedily to reinstate Herman in all his privileges as a member of their House. That Herman, who had risked his goods and endangered his life by helping to set forth the English New Testament, was acquainted with Tyndale, may be taken for granted; and that the whole story of Anne's gracious intervention, heightened by the charm of her beauty and her winning manners, was recounted to Tyndale by the grateful merchant—this also may surely be accepted without proof. That the heart of the exile, so long a stranger to kindness from men in authority, would be cheered by this unexpected act of royal patronage, and would begin to expand with the hope of the ultimate success of that glorious cause for which he had laboured in sorrow and disappointment, surely needs not to be suggested to any one of ordinary understanding.

It is true that the kindness had come from one whose elevation to the throne he had formerly condemned, as one of the pernicious "practices" of the prelates of England acting in the interest of the pope; and we have no reason for believing that he had even yet entirely abandoned these opinions; yet all the more on that very account would he

[1] Cotton MSS., *Cleopatra*, E. v. The year is not given, but must have been either 1534 or 1535, and in all probability it was the former.

appreciate the generosity and magnanimity of the fair and unfortunate queen. His gratitude, it is believed, was exhibited in a characteristic manner. When his work of revision was completed, he caused a copy of the amended New Testament to be printed upon vellum, and decorated as a present meet for a queen. The volume still exists, an honourable memorial at once of Tyndale's gratitude, and of Anne's generous protection of a British subject who had been injured by his efforts on behalf of the English Bible. It is beautifully printed; and is illuminated and otherwise ornamented with great care and taste. The original binding has probably perished; at present it is bound in plain dark blue leather, without any ornament beyond the coat of arms of the Rev. Mr. Cracherode, who bequeathed it to the British Museum; and who, it may be conjectured, had rebound it. On the edges, which are richly gilt and tooled, are inscribed in large letters, which time and incautious handling have almost effaced the words ANNA, ANGLIÆ REGINA.[1] It is not unworthy of notice that the prefatory matter has been omitted, and that the name of Tyndale nowhere occurs in it; for the book was simply the offering of a grateful heart, not the gift of a fawning Churchman eager to propitiate the favour of a royal patron. The Bible needs no adventitious aid of dedications to "Most High and Mighty Princes;" and it would have been well if in this respect subsequent revisers had imitated the noble independence of the first translator.[2]

From the description of the New Testament of 1534 which has now been given, the reader will be able to understand with

[1] Various romantic details have been circulated concerning this interesting book, as *e.g.*, that passages in it have been underlined, presumably by Anne herself, for devotional purposes. This has probably arisen from confounding it with another copy of the Testament of 1534 in the Museum, which has passages underlined, though not such as would naturally be used for devotional purposes.

[2] It is not intended to be asserted that there is any complete documentary proof that this New Testament was actually a gift from Tyndale to Queen Anne; it is a question not of *direct* but of *circumstantial* evidence; but the circumstances are so strongly in favour of the truth of the theory, that we may well insist upon the old logical axiom, *neganti incumbit probatio.*

what truth it has been asserted that it is Tyndale's noblest contribution to the English Bible. He had added to the obligations under which his first New Testament laid his countrymen, by carefully revising every word of the text, giving clearness to what was obscure, replacing weak by more emphatic renderings, removing grammatical inaccuracies, improving the rhythm of the language, and in general making it more exactly than before a reproduction in English of all the force, and beauty, and simplicity of the original. The one excellence which has so often been wanting to the perfection of a literary work, Tyndale possessed in the highest measure. He was master of what the poet calls "the last and greatest art, the art to blot;" he was the *beau-idéal* of a translator, uniting consummate felicity in the first draft of his work with unwearied care in the subsequent revision of it.

Such a work, with the accompanying prologues, glosses, and translations from the Old Testament, must have fully occupied all Tyndale's energies during the year 1534; and it is not surprising, therefore, that he should have been extremely indignant at the proceedings of Joye in attempting to deprive him of the fruit of his labours, by filling the market with a cheaper and inferior translation, and so curtailing the circulation of the new and improved version. His conduct appeared to Tyndale so dishonourable, and his changes in the New Testament so dangerous, that he added to his revised edition, a *second* preface, directed especially against Joye; and it was the publication of this preface which led to the prolonged and bitter controversy to which we shall now briefly advert.

"Thou shalt understand, most dear reader," so runs the address, "when I had taken in hand to look over the New Testament again, and to compare it with the Greek, and to mend whatsoever I could find amiss, and had almost finished the labour, George Joye secretly took in hand to correct it also, by what occasion his conscience knoweth, and prevented

[anticipated] me, in so much that his correction was printed in great number, ere mine began [to be printed]. When it was spied and word brought me, though it seemed to divers others that George Joye had not used the office of an honest man, seeing he knew that I was in correcting it myself, neither did walk after the rules of the love and softness which Christ and His disciples teach us, how that we should do nothing of strife to move debate, or of vain-glory, or of covetousness; yet I took the thing in worth as I have done divers other in time past, as one that have more experience of the nature and disposition of that man's complexion, and supposed that a little spice of covetousness and vain-glory (two blind guides) had been the only cause that moved him so to do; about which things I strive with no man, and so followed after, and corrected forth, and caused this to be printed without surmise or looking on his correction. But when the printing of mine was almost finished, one brought me a copy [of Joye's edition], and showed me so many places in such wise altered that I was astonied, and wondered not a little what fury had driven him to make such change, and to call it a diligent correction."

The changes which thus excited Tyndale's indignation were not, indeed, so numerous as he seems to have imagined; but, under the circumstances which have been already narrated, they were extremely irritating and offensive. Joye had had the assurance to reprint Tyndale's translation almost *verbatim*, while at the same time announcing his work as a "diligent correction;" and not content with thus robbing the Translator of the fruit of his toil, had the further assurance to change the renderings in a few verses, so as to favour his own opinions on the question which he had so often debated with Tyndale, the condition of the soul after death. Against this double injury Tyndale protests with great vehemence. With obvious and unanswerable rhetoric he urged that Joye should have put his own name to a translation which so materially misrepresented the opinions of its actual author; he claimed no

monopoly of the right to translate the Scriptures into English, but it was not lawful, he submitted, "nor yet expedient for the edifying of the unity of the faith of Christ, that whosoever will, shall by his own authority take *another man's translation*, and put out and in, and change at pleasure, and call it a correction."

As to the character of the changes, he proceeds to remark somewhat sarcastically, "George Joye hath had of a long time marvellous imaginations about this word *resurrection*, that it should be taken for the state of souls after their departing from their bodies, and hath also, though he hath been reasoned with thereof and desired to cease, yet sown his doctrine by secret letters on that side the sea [in England], and caused great division among the brethren, insomuch that John Fryth, being in prison in the Tower of London, a little before his death, wrote that we should warn him and desire him to cease, and would have then written against him, had I not withstood him. Thereto I have been since informed that no small number through his curiosity [whimsical speculations] utterly deny the resurrection of the flesh and body, affirming that the soul, when she is departed, is the spiritual body of the resurrection, and other resurrection shall there none be. And I have talked with some of them myself, so doted in that folly, that it were as good persuade a post, as to pluck that madness out of their brains. And of this is all George Joye's unquiet curiosity the whole occasion; whether he be of the said faction also, or not, to that let him answer himself."

His own opinions on the subject Tyndale sets forth at length in the noble and earnest *protestation* which has been repeatedly printed:—

"Concerning the resurrection, I protest before God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, and before the universal congregation that believeth in Him, that I believe, according to the open and manifest Scriptures and Catholic faith, that Christ is risen again in the flesh which He received of His mother the Blessed Virgin Mary, and body wherein He died: and that we shall all, both good and bad, rise both flesh and body, and appear together before the judgment-seat of Christ, to receive every man according to his

deeds: and that the bodies of all that believe and continue in the true faith of Christ shall be endued with like immortality and glory as is the body of Christ.

"And I protest before God, and our Saviour Christ, and all that believe in Him, that I hold of the souls that are departed as much as may be proved by manifest and open Scripture, and think the souls departed in the faith of Christ and love of the law of God, to be in no worse case than the soul of Christ was from the time that He delivered His Spirit into the hands of His Father until the resurrection of His body in glory and immortality. Nevertheless I confess openly that I am not persuaded that they be already in the full glory that Christ is in, or the elect angels of God are in; neither is it any article of my faith: for if it so were, I see not but then the preaching of the resurrection of the flesh were a thing in vain. Notwithstanding yet I am ready to believe it if it may be proved with open Scripture: and I have desired George Joye to take open texts that seem to make for that purpose, as this is, 'To-day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise;' to make thereof what he could; for I receive not in the Scripture the private interpretation of any man's brain, without open testimony of any Scripture agreeing thereto.

"Moreover, I take God (which alone seeth the heart) to record to my conscience, beseeching Him that my part be not in the blood of Christ if I wrote of all that I have written throughout all my book aught of an evil purpose, of envy or malice to any man, or to stir up any false doctrine or opinion in the Church of Christ, or to be author of any sect, or to draw disciples after me, or that I would be esteemed or had in price above the least child that is born; save only of pity and compassion I had and yet have on the blindness of my brethren, and to bring them unto the knowledge of Christ, and to make every one of them, if it were possible, as perfect as an angel of heaven; and to weed out all that is not planted of our Heavenly Father, and to bring down all that lifteth up itself against the knowledge of the salvation that is in the blood of Christ. Also my part be not in Christ if mine heart be not to follow and live according as I teach; and also if mine heart weep not night and day for mine own sin and other men's indifferently, beseeching God to convert us all, and to take His wrath from us, and to be merciful as well to all other men as to mine own soul; caring for the wealth [welfare] of the realm I was born in, for the King and all that are thereof, as a tender-hearted mother would do for her only son.

"As concerning all I have translated or otherwise written, I beseech all men to read it for that purpose I wrote it, even to bring them to the knowledge of the Scripture; and as far as the Scripture approveth it so far to allow it; and if in any place the Word of God disallow it, there to refuse it, as I do before our Saviour Christ and His congregation. And where they find faults let them show it me if they be nigh, or write to me if they be far off; or write openly against it and improve [disprove] it; and I promise them, if I shall perceive that their reasons conclude [are conclusive], I will confess mine ignorance openly."

If Tyndale's animadversions upon Joye were severe, it will be admitted that the severity was not undeserved; the conduct of Joye would have been base even in an enemy of the Reformation, but in one who professed to be a friend, it was altogether inexcusable. Tyndale's remarks, naturally enough, stung him to the quick, and he prepared a defence of himself, which he proposed to publish to the world as widely, if possible, as the attack had been circulated. Mutual friends intervened, and attempted to arrest a controversy which was sure to be seized by the Romanists as a proof of the inevitable discord which attended all secession from the pale of their communion. It was agreed accordingly that Joye should not publish his defence, and that Tyndale should, in subsequent editions of his New Testament, modify the assertions of his damnatory epistle. From some cause, of which we have only Joye's partial account, this arrangement was not carried into execution; Joye's defence was printed; and the minds of all lovers of the Reformation were scandalised by this public quarrel between two who for some years had been among the recognised leaders of the Reformation.

Joye's work was entitled, *An Apology, made by George Joye, to satisfy, if it may be, William Tyndale: to purge and defend himself against so many slanderous lies feigned upon him in Tyndale's uncharitable and unsober epistle.*[1] His defence of his conduct in appropriating Tyndale's translation without acknowledgment is extremely lame and unsatisfactory; and his abuse of Tyndale would have been unjustifiable, even if Tyndale's attack had been entirely unprovoked. But on the speculative question debated between them Joye defended himself with very considerable ability. Tyndale, in fact, had not been consistent in his teaching on the subject, and Joye argues with great force and pertinacity in favour of his own

[1] It contained on the title-page the quotation from the Psalms, "Lord, deliver me from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue;" and the declaration, "I know and believe that the bodies of every dead man shall rise again at Doomsday."

views. Tyndale, moreover, had somewhat misrepresented or misunderstood Joye; Joye did not deny the resurrection of the body; he merely maintained that, according to Scripture, the state of the soul between death and the resurrection of the body was a state which was appropriately described as a life, and that Tyndale had erroneously used the word *resurrection* in his version in passages where the resurrection of the body was not at all alluded to, but rather the continued life of the soul after its separation from the body.

The question thus debated is speculative rather than practical; one which Scripture has not clearly decided, and on which, accordingly, a variety of opinions has always prevailed in the Church of Christ; but on the whole Joye seems to have the best of the argument, he certainly espouses that view of the question which has found most favour among Protestant theologians. In learning and in ability of every kind, however, Joye's inferiority to Tyndale is conspicuous; he seems to have been alike ignorant of Greek and Hebrew, and could only translate from the Vulgate; and, in fact, it is obvious that he was one of that class of shallow, troublesome, narrow-minded men of one idea who in colloquial *parlance* are denominated *bores;* so that we are at no loss to understand Tyndale's impatient gestures and contemptuous treatment of his interminable arguments as they "walked in the field together."

One opinion, however, expressed by Joye, seems to have made considerable impression upon Tyndale, and is so sensible that it deserves to be remembered to his credit. It was the first and plainest protest that had yet been uttered in favour of the circulation of the pure simple text of Holy Scripture, leaving the Word of God to convey its own message without the aid of glosses and comments.

"In good faith," says he, "as for me, I had as lief put the truth in the text as in the margent; and except the gloss expound the text, or where the text is plain enough, I had as lief leave such frivole glosses clean out. *I would the Scripture*

were so purely and plainly translated that it needed neither note, gloss, nor scholia, so that the reader might once swim without a cork." This was certainly the true ideal at which all translators were bound to aim, and it is not impossible that the remark may have profoundly affected Tyndale in the work in which he was now engaged.

For, once again, and for the last time, Tyndale had addressed himself to the task of revising and improving his New Testament. Joye's *Apology* was written at the close of February, 1535, and he informs us that Tyndale was even then preparing a new edition of his great work. Before, however, it was passed through the press, the illustrious Translator was arrested and imprisoned; that fate which he had so long apprehended overtaking him, most appropriately, while he was still busied with that glorious task to which he had consecrated so many years of labour, and for which he was ready, if need were, to sacrifice his life.

This edition of 1535 furnishes abundant evidence of Tyndale's continued care in revising and improving his work. For the first time headings were prefixed to the chapters throughout the Gospels and the Acts; and in almost every page one can find proof of the assertion on the second title that it was "diligently corrected and compared with the Greek." Errors of the press, which, in spite of all care, had crept into the edition of 1534, are removed; even the "Epistles from the Old Testament," which were subjoined as a species of Appendix, and which would most naturally have been exempt from any but a most conscientious revision, bear traces of the same careful and elaborate superintendence; and throughout the text of the New Testament numerous changes are introduced, tending in general to communicate additional force and clearness to the version, and to bring it into closer correspondence with the original. And it is worthy of notice that this—Tyndale's last New Testament—was issued without any marginal notes. Whether he had felt the justice of Joye's suggestion, or whether any other cause unknown had induced him to adopt

this plan, we cannot, of course, determine; it was, however, manifestly an improvement, and on the whole it is not unworthy of notice that his very latest edition of his work should have contained that "bare text of the Scripture," of which he had so solemnly declared years before, that he would "offer his body to suffer what pain or torture, yea what death his Grace [Henry VIII.] would, *so that this be obtained.*"

The chief peculiarity, however, of this edition of 1535 lies in its strange and unwonted orthography, which has seriously perplexed scholars, and has given rise to many curious theories. Among the peculiar forms which occur are such as *faether*, *moether*, *maester*, *stoene*, *moost*, *etc.*[1]

To some biographers this appears to be one of the finest instances of the sublime that has ever occurred; for it has been assumed that this curious spelling was adopted in order to facilitate the perusal of Holy Scripture by the ploughboys of Gloucestershire, in accordance with Tyndale's original prophetic declaration that, if God spared him in life, he would make the boy "who followeth the plough" to know the Word of God as well as any of the pope's doctors. If this theory could be established it would certainly throw a romantic interest around this last fruit of Tyndale's labours as a translator; unfortunately, however, for the romance of this delightful conjecture, there is not the slightest reason for believing that this unusual spelling in any way represents the dialect of Gloucestershire; and, if it did, it is employed so intermittently that it would have been but a slight aid to devout ploughboys endeavouring to spell their way through Scripture.

On the other hand, some philologists, taking little account of Tyndale's life and character, have imagined that this singular spelling was in reality a profound system of phonological reform; that, in fact, after much investigation of the defects of English orthography, Tyndale had devised an elaborate method for bringing the spelling of the English

[1] Some two hundred in all: a complete list has been printed by Mr. Fry for private circulation among scholars.

language into exact correspondence with the pronunciation. To state such a theory is to refute it; only a philologist mad with enthusiasm for his special study could either imagine such an explanation or by possibility believe it. The true explanation, in all probability, is that which lies on the surface; the work, begun in the commencement of 1535, when Tyndale was at liberty, was not printed till after his arrest, was consequently issued without his personal supervision, and was corrected by some Flemish compositor, who naturally introduced, in many cases, Flemish equivalents for the English vowel sounds.[1]

While busied with his work, Tyndale was treacherously arrested; and his labours were brought to a premature termination. He had been preserved in safety during years when dangers threatened on every hand; and now, when the heat of the battle was over, when the horizon on all sides was bright with prospects of coming prosperity and peace, he was unexpectedly seized, and fell a victim to the persevering vengeance of his enemies. He was overwhelmed by that terrible death which at one time had seemed so imminent, but which even he had perhaps begun to look upon as no longer the probable conclusion of his career. Nobly and heroically had he done his work, nothing was wanting to complete the splendour of his life but the crown of martyrdom. Still the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews were to find their mystic accomplishment, and the "Testament was not to be dedicated without blood."

[1] The whole appearance of the peculiar orthography is such as, at the first glance, to suggest its Flemish origin. Westcott (p. 65, note) has given the same explanation as that in the text; and so has Mr. Ellis in his profound and exhaustive treatise on *Early English Pronunciation*. I believe Westcott and Anderson are both mistaken in supposing that Tyndale revised this edition while in prison: Joye, whose *Apology* was written in February, 1535, says expressly that Tyndale was *then* engaged on the work. For place of printing see *Addendum*, p. 460. [Mr. Fry some years ago discovered the text of the 1535 in a 1534 edition. Possibly therefore the 1535 may be only a pirated misspelt reprint of the 1534 edition.]

CHAPTER XIII.

ARREST OF TYNDALE: HIS IMPRISONMENT, TRIAL, AND MARTYRDOM.

A.D. 1535—1536.

EVER since the middle of 1534, Tyndale had found a home at Antwerp in the house of Thomas Poyntz, one of the English Merchant Adventurers established in that great mart of commerce. Antwerp was then at the height of its prosperity, by far the most important commercial city in Europe: and merchants from all parts of the civilised world were welcomed to the great emporium of trade, and were generously allowed to share in most of the privileges of the citizens. As far back as the year 1474 the magistrates of the city, in order to encourage the presence of English merchants, had granted them the use of a spacious mansion which had been acquired from a person of rank; and it was under this roof, beyond a doubt, that Tyndale had found, after so many wanderings, a happy and congenial home.

Time has wrought many changes on the wealthy mistress of the Scheldt; and the bombardments by the Spanish and by the French have destroyed much that the hand of Time might have spared; still, that quarter of the city in which the English House was situated, retains even in our own day not a little of the appearance which it must have presented in the sixteenth century; and the traveller can still recognise the house in which Tyndale resided up to the moment of his arrest. In the labyrinth of streets that lie to the north of the Grande Place and the Cathedral, the tourist may easily

discover the Rue de la Vieille Bourse; and it was in the block bounded by this street on the one side, and Rue Zirck on the other, that the house was situated where the English merchants were lodged from 1474 to 1558. The narrow street, overshadowed with lofty houses, which even yet bear traces of their former grandeur, has been comparatively little altered by the lapse of three centuries; and favoured by the silence which now generally prevails, in what used to be a haunt of bustle, the imagination of the enthusiastic traveller may without difficulty picture the illustrious Translator issuing from the low gateway of the English factory, turning his eyes upwards to contemplate with wonder the matchless grace of the Cathedral tower which rises right in front, and which was then fresh from the hands of Waghemakere, or stopping to listen to the music which the silver chimes seemed to be raining down from heaven.[1]

His residence with Poyntz not only provided Tyndale with the comforts and the companionship of a home; it added considerably to his personal safety. It was amongst the privileges of the citizens of Antwerp that none could be arrested merely on suspicion, or could be imprisoned for more than three days without trial; and the same privilege was extended to the English merchants resident amongst them. Here, therefore, provided he exercised ordinary caution, Tyndale might have been considered safe from every danger that could threaten. And, indeed, he may have begun to hope that the termination of his exile was at hand, and that he might soon be permitted or even invited to visit his native land without any fear of personal danger. The rigour of the laws against so-called heresy had been relaxed; men were still dying, it was true, for religion, but it was no longer the Reformers who were led to the stake, it was those who had

[1] For the identification of the English House I am indebted to the information of M. Genard, Archivist of Antwerp, who has published an excellent *Notice sur les Architectes Herman et Dominique de Waghemakere.* The statements in the *Memoirs of Sir Thomas Gresham* are considerably in error on this point.

hitherto been the most prominent defenders of the authority of the Church that were martyred for refusing to acknowledge the royal supremacy. Tyndale's great antagonist, Sir Thomas More, was disgraced, and imprisoned, and in peril of his life; Fisher, another resolute antagonist, shared the same misfortunes and the same dangers; the men who were highest in royal favour, Cranmer and Cromwell, were every day becoming more friendly to the principles of the Reformers; and that great work on which Tyndale had so long laboured, instead of being regarded with bitter hostility, had come to be considered as necessary and praiseworthy.

The Convocation which met at the close of 1534 petitioned the king "that the sacred Scriptures should be translated into the English tongue by certain honest and learned men named for that purpose by his Majesty, and should be delivered to the people according to their learning;" and for some time Tyndale's former associate, Miles Coverdale, had been busily preparing, unquestionably at the instigation of Cromwell, a translation of the whole of Holy Scripture. Everything, therefore, seemed auspicious; the cause against which king and prelates had so long directed their fiercest opposition was visibly triumphant: and it seemed not a remote contingency that Tyndale might be invited to return to his native land, and might even be promoted to some of those ecclesiastical dignities of which no one was more worthy. The sovereign who elevated the out-spoken Latimer to a bishopric could scarcely have failed to appreciate the boldness and honesty of Tyndale.

If Tyndale had begun to indulge in any pleasant dreams of returning to labour in peace in his native country, those cheering visions were rudely dispelled. In Antwerp under the shelter of Poyntz' hospitable roof he was apparently safe; but he was surrounded by dangers, and treachery or carelessness might at any moment place him in the power of his enemies. In some respects England was now a safer place of refuge than the Low Countries. The Emperor Charles V.,

compelled to bow to the force of circumstances in Germany, and to tolerate the Protestants whom he was unable to repress, compounded for this reluctant weakness by treating the Protestants in his hereditary dominions with increased severity. According to one of the best and most recent historians of Belgium, it was Charles that inaugurated the policy which was subsequently matured under the ferocious rule of Philip and the Duke of Alba; and the reign of the great emperor is sullied by cruelties which almost rival the merciless *régime* of his son.[1] Penal ordinances of Draconian rigour were enacted year after year, in order to check, if possible, the progress of Lutheran opinions. In October 1529, it was publicly ordained that the "reading, purchasing, or possessing any proscribed books, or any New Testaments prohibited by the theologians of Louvain; attendance at any meeting of heretics, disputing about Holy Scripture, want of due respect to the images of God and the Saints," were to be treated as crimes for which "men were to be beheaded, women buried alive, and the relapsed burnt."[2]

In spite of these terrible measures, Lutheranism continued to make rapid progress in the Netherlands; and the Emperor, in revenge, issued fresh edicts more stringent than before. Informers were encouraged by the promise of a liberal reward, and a share in the confiscated goods of all convicted heretics; and, lest the government officials should be wanting in severity, it was ordered that all who were remiss should be reported and punished. The Inquisition, which had been established some years before, was armed with plenary authority to seize all suspected persons, to try, to torture, to confiscate, to execute, without any right of appeal from their sentence; and these tyrannical powers they exercised with relentless cruelty. Charles was not one whit less ferocious than his son, though English historians have usually painted him in more

[1] A. Henné, *Histoire du Règne de Charles-Quint.*

[2] Henné, *ubi supra:* the words of the ordinance are significantly brief: "Les hommes par l'épée, les femmes par la fosse, les relaps par le feu."

favourable colours; and every fresh visit to the Low Countries was signalised by additional edicts against the Reformers and a renewed outbreak of persecution.

From these sanguinary proceedings Tyndale enjoyed, as we have said, a considerable amount of protection by the privileges which the city of Antwerp asserted for its own citizens, and accorded to the merchants who had taken up their residence there. In spite of the savage edict which declared that any printer who presumed to print without a licence should be branded with a cross so deeply that it could not be effaced, and should also, at the discretion of the judge, lose an eye or a hand, the printers of Antwerp had successfully asserted their liberty to print the New Testament in any language without asking the permission of any imperial officer.[1] And so long as he was within the shelter of the English House, Tyndale was protected by the privilege which exempted the citizens of Antwerp and strangers resident there from being arrested in their houses except for some great crime. Outside of the House, however, he walked in perpetual danger: he enjoyed no special protection; he had no house or hired chamber of his own, and might be arrested on mere suspicion at any hour of day or night.[1] Hitherto he had led a charmed life, and he had in former years wonderfully escaped the hostility of Henry and Wolsey; but a more subtle plot was now devised against him by men whose plans were so skilfully laid that it was scarcely possible for them to fail of success.

[1] The point is of sufficient importance to justify the following corroborative quotation: "Rogo, utrum liceat sine auctoritate publicâ Novum Testamentum imprimere. Respondit [Etienne Meerdmann, the Antwerp printer] licere quidem omnino sacras literas imprimere sine ullius hominis concessu aut prohibitione. . . . . Addebat quoque nullas unquam Imperatoris leges editionem sacrarum literarum prohibuisse [*i.e.*, not in Antwerp]. Hanc sententiam confirmabat, et suis et aliorum exemplis, qui in eâdem civitate [Antverpiæ] Novum Testamentum, in omnibus pene Europæ linguis, typis impressum evulgâssent." The questioner here was Francisco d'Ensinas, who himself published the New Testament in Spanish at Antwerp. *Mémoires d'Ensinas*, Vol. I. p. 177: published by the Historical Society of Belgium.

[2] See Guicciardini's *Descriptio totius Belgii.*

The secrets of the plot which led to the arrest and the martyrdom of Tyndale have never been, perhaps never will be, completely unravelled; but there is no difficulty in understanding the rationale of the operations which were adopted against him. It was not in Belgium, but in England, that the plot was concocted. Some of those whom his writings had most bitterly offended, hopeless of any opportunity of wreaking their long-cherished vengeance, now that England had thrown off the papal supremacy and was manifestly gravitating towards Protestantism, determined to avail themselves of the bloody edicts of the emperor to accomplish their purpose. It was well known that Tyndale was resident in Antwerp, and it was probably not difficult to be introduced to his acquaintance. Inside the English House, or even in the company of his friend Poyntz, he was safe; but it was easy to watch an opportunity when he was alone; it was possible to decoy him away from his refuge; and once seized, and subjected to the operation of the sanguinary laws against heresy, his escape was extremely improbable, his doom was practically settled. It was assumed that Henry would not actively interfere; and if he did, it was hardly likely that the emperor, irritated by Henry's recent proceedings, would pay much heed to the representations of an "apostate and adulterous sovereign," who had been solemnly excommunicated by the head of the Church. The plot was cunningly contrived, the work, evidently, of one who was no novice in craft; and agents were speedily found to put it in execution. How they proceeded in their base and cruel treachery may best be read in the pages of Foxe, who received the narrative from the lips of Poyntz himself.

"William Tyndale, being in the town of Antwerp, had been lodged about one whole year in the house of Thomas Poyntz, an Englishman, who kept there a house of English merchants [*i.e.*, lived in the English House]. About which time came thither one out of England, whose name was Henry Philips, his father being *customer* [*i.e.*, employed in the

Custom-house] of Poole, a comely fellow, like as he had been a *gentleman*, having a *servant* [Gabriel Donne] with him; but wherefore he came, or for what purpose he was sent thither, no man could tell. Master Tyndale divers times was desired forth to dinner and supper among merchants: by the means whereof this Henry Philips became acquainted with him; so that within short space M. Tyndale had a great confidence in him, and brought him to his lodging to the house of Thomas Poyntz, and had him also once or twice with him to dinner and supper, and further entered such friendship with him that through his procurement he lay in the same house of the said Poyntz: to whom he showed moreover his books and other secrets of his study; so little did Tyndale then mistrust this traitor.

"But Poyntz, having no great confidence in the fellow, asked Master Tyndale how he came acquainted with this Philips. Master Tyndale answered, that he was an honest man, handsomely learned, and very conformable [*i.e.*, favourable to Protestant views]. Then Poyntz, perceiving that he bare such favour unto him, said no more; thinking that he was brought acquainted with him by some friend of his. The said Philips, being in the town three or four days, upon a time desired Poyntz to walk with him forth of the town to show him the commodities thereof; and, in walking together about the town, had communication of divers things, and some of the king's affairs. By the which talk Poyntz as yet suspected nothing; but after, by the sequel of the matter, he perceived more what he intended. In the mean time this he well perceived, that he bare no great favour either to the setting forth of any good thing, either to the proceedings of the King of England. But after, when the time was past, Poyntz perceived this to be his mind,—to feel if he could perceive by him, whether he might break with him in the matter, for lucre of money to help him to his purpose; for he perceived before that he was *moneyed* [*i.e.*, well provided with money], and would that Poyntz should think no less;"

but *by whom* [*i.e.*, who had provided the money], it was unknown. For he had desired Poyntz before to help him to divers things; and such things as he named, he required might be of the best: 'For,' said he, 'I have money enough.' But of this talk came nothing, but that men should think he had some things to do; for nothing else followed of his talk. So it was to be suspected, that Philips was in doubt to move this matter [*i.e.*, of arresting Tyndale] to any of the rulers or officers of the town of Antwerp, for doubt it should come to the knowledge of some Englishmen, and by the means thereof Tyndale should have had warning.

"From Antwerp Philips went to the Court of Brussels, which is from thence twenty-four English miles, the king having there no ambassador;[1] for at that time the King of England and the emperor were at a controversy for the question betwixt the King and Catherine, who was aunt to the Emperor, and the discord grew so much that it was doubted lest there should have been war; so that Philips, as a traitor both against God and the King, was there the better retained, as also other traitors more besides him, who, after he had betrayed Master Tyndale into their hands, showed himself likewise against the king's own person, and there set forth things against the king. To make short, the said Philips did so much there, that he procured to bring from thence with him, to Antwerp, that Procureur-General which is the Emperor's attorney, with other certain officers as after followeth: the which was not done with small charges and expense, from whomsoever it came.

"Within a while after, Poyntz sitting at his door, Philips' *man* [*i.e.*, the pretended servant] came unto him, and asked whether Master Tyndale was there; and said, his master would come to him; and so departed. But whether his

[1] Anderson says this was a mistake, for that Vaughan was at Brussels; Foxe is right, however; Hackett, the ambassador at Brussels, was dead; and Vaughan was in England.

master, Philips, were in the town or not, it was not known; but at that time Poyntz heard no more, neither of the master nor of the man. Within three or four days after, Poyntz went forth to the town of Barrow [Bergen-op-Zoom], being eighteen English miles from Antwerp, where he had business to do for the space of a month or six weeks; and in the time of his absence, Henry Philips came again to Antwerp to the house of Poyntz, and coming in, spake with his wife, asking her for Master Tyndale, and whether he could dine there with him; saying, 'What good meat shall we have?' She answered, 'Such as the market will give.' Then went he forth again (as it is thought) to provide and set the officers, which he brought with him from Brussels, in the street and about the door. Then about noon he came again, and went to Master Tyndale, and desired him to lend him forty shillings: 'For,' said he, 'I lost my purse this morning, coming over at the passage between this and Mechlin.' So Master Tyndale took him forty shillings; the which was easy to be had of him, if he had it; for in the wily subtilties of this world he was simple and unexpert.

"Then said Philips, 'Master Tyndale, you shall be my guest here this day.' 'No,' said Master Tyndale, 'I go forth this day to dinner; and you shall go with me, and be my guest, where you shall be welcome.' So when it was dinner-time, Master Tyndale went forth with Philips; and at the going out of Poyntz' house was a long narrow entry, so that two could not go in a front. Master Tyndale would have put Philips before him, but Philips would in no wise, but put Master Tyndale afore; for that he pretended to show great humanity [*i.e.*, politeness]. So Master Tyndale, being a man of no great stature, went before; and Philips, a tall comely person, followed behind him, who had set officers on either side of the door upon two seats (which, being there, might see who came into the entry); and coming through the same entry Philips pointed with his finger over Master Tyndale's head down to him, that the officers, which

sat at the door, might see that it was he whom they should take; as the officers that took Master Tyndale afterward told Poyntz; and said to Poyntz, when they had laid him in prison, that they pitied to see his simplicity when they took him. Then they brought him to the emperor's attorney, where he dined. Then came the said attorney to the house of Poyntz, and sent away all that was there of Master Tyndale's, as well his books as other things: and from thence Tyndale was had to the Castle of Vilford, eighteen English miles from Antwerp; and there he remained until he was put to death."

It seems scarcely possible to believe that a plan, so skilfully devised to meet the peculiar circumstances of the time, and carried out moreover at very considerable expense, had originated with this unknown *customer* of Poole,[1] or even with his more crafty companion, Gabriel Donne, whom he declared to be his sole confidant in the plot. Some other conspirators, more astute, more profoundly versed in wiles, and more thoroughly acquainted with the secrets of courts, were doubtless behind the scenes to control the movements of the subordinate emissaries, and to supply the necessary funds: but so well has their secret been kept, that no researches amongst State Papers at home or abroad have raised the veil which conceals the prime movers from our view. It has been surmised that Gardiner was the deviser of the well-laid train; and in astuteness Gardiner was certainly without a rival in England; but it is, to say the least, premature to cast upon him the odium of a suspicion for which not the smallest tittle of evidence has ever yet been adduced, beyond the vague assertion of Hall that "Tyndale was betrayed and taken, as many said, not without the help and procurement of some *bishops* of this realm." That Tyndale was a thorn in the side of many of the English prelates, we do not need to be told; that they would gladly avail themselves of any means

[1] A series of letters from this man Phyllypps, as he calls himself, written about this time to various friends, asking them to intercede on his behalf with his parents, whom his bad conduct had justly offended, are given in the *Publications of the Record Office*, 27 Henry VIII, Vol. IX. p. 389.

of terminating his career may be assumed without any breach of charity; they would have burned him in England, and they would have no scruples consequently about contributing to seize and burn him in Brabant; but if they were concerned in the plot, they have certainly shown wonderful skill in obliterating all traces of their participation in it.

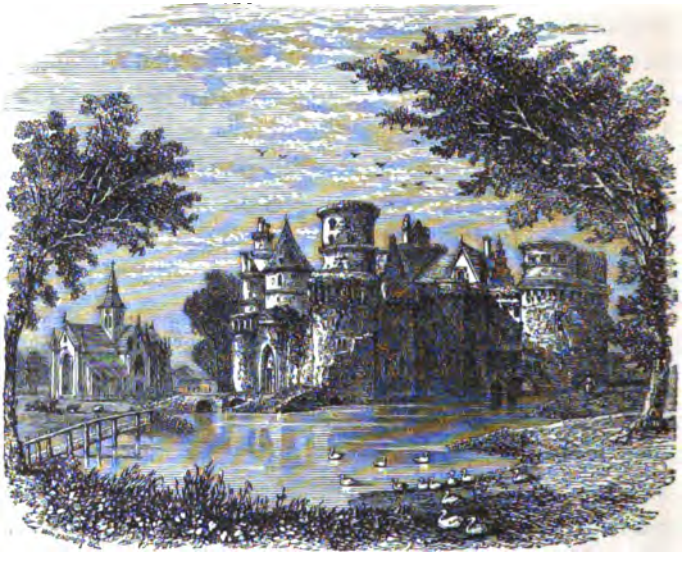
It may possibly have occurred to the reader, who remembers Henry's former efforts to get Tyndale into his power, to suspect that this plot also may have been devised with the privity of the English monarch. On this point, however, there is fortunately no room for doubt. Philips was a member of that reactionary party in England who hated Henry as a tyrant and a sacrilegious apostate, and who were at that very time plotting in every corner of his kingdom against his royal authority. It is quite certain, therefore, that Henry was the very last man in England to act in concert with those who apprehended Tyndale; and, indeed, the reader will presently see that, so far from having lent his countenance to the conspiracy against the Reformer, he co-operated with Cromwell in his efforts to procure the release of the illustrious captive.

Hitherto, the date of Tyndale's arrest has been merely roughly calculated by conjecture; we are now, however, able to fix it precisely on the authority of official documents. There is preserved among the Archives at Brussels the formal entry of the payment to the Lieutenant of the Castle of Vilvorde, Adolph Van Wesele, of the expenses incurred during Tyndale's imprisonment of *a year and a hundred and thirty-five days*; and as Tyndale was martyred, according to Foxe, on the 6th of October, 1536, it is not difficult to calculate that he must have been arrested on the 23rd or 24th of May, 1535.[1]

The Castle of Vilvorde, to which Tyndale was now removed to spend the last sixteen months of his life, was then the great State prison of the Low Countries. A small town, equidistant from Brussels, Malines, and Louvain, Vilvorde has

[1] The document is printed in the Appendix.

never attained any great importance; yet it is one of the most ancient places in Belgium. Its history is associated with the conversion of the Franks to Christianity; it figures in the annals of Charlemagne and Lothair; English sovereigns have resided within its fortifications; and it was here that Edward III. summoned what Froissart calls a *parliament* to decide upon his claims to the throne of France. In 1374, or the following year, Wenceslas, Duke of Brabant and Count of



THE CASTLE OF VILVORDE.

Louvain, anxious to provide himself with a place of security, erected on the banks of the Senne, at Vilvorde, a fortress constructed after the model of the Bastile, which had been recently completed in Paris. It consisted of seven massive towers, connected by lower erections; and the whole was surrounded by a huge moat, spanned by three drawbridges. Of this grim and, in those days, impregnable fortress, in which Tyndale found a prison for so many months, and was at length to find a grave, scarce a vestige now remains: it was

demolished at the end of last century, and its site is occupied by the huge white-washed penitentiary, so well known to all travellers between Antwerp and Brussels; and only a few traces of some of the original dungeons still exist among the arches of the bridge which forms the sole approach to the modern prison.[1]

The arrest had been contrived so skilfully, and executed so secretly[2] and promptly, that any attempt at a rescue was hopeless. Probably, before the arrest was known to the English merchants in Antwerp, Tyndale was safely immured behind the gloomy towers of the old fortress; and it is unlikely that even the household of Poyntz knew anything of what had occurred, till the Procureur-General, the terrible Pierre Dufief, returned to search Tyndale's chamber, and carry off his books and papers and other effects. Some days must have elapsed before Poyntz could be recalled from Bergen-op-Zoom; but on his return, the English merchants, who considered themselves aggrieved both by the loss of a friend whom they all esteemed, and by this encroachment upon their rights and privileges, wrote to the Queen Regent, Mary of Hungary, entreating her to release Tyndale. Their remonstrance was of course unavailing; the arrest of Tyndale, however treacherous, had been legally effected; the charges advanced against him were considered to be of a grave nature, and required to be investigated according to law; and it was evident that the danger which threatened him, if he was to be tried by a Flemish court on a charge of heresy, was of the

[1] See an admirable description of it in the *Histoire des Environs de Bruxelles, par Alphonse Wauters*. There is an excellent water-colour sketch of the old fortress by Witzthumb, preserved in the Royal Library at Brussels, which has been lithographed as the frontispiece of M. Galesloot's little brochure, *Madame Deshoulières*, and from which the woodcut in the text has been taken.

[2] As an illustration of the *secrecy* it is noticeable that no entry occurs, either amongst the accounts of the *Amman* of Brussels, or the *Drossart* of Antwerp, of any sums expended in the arrest. Every possible source of information on this point was placed at my disposal by M. Pinchart, and searched for me by M. Cuijpers, but not a single entry occurs. The expenses had, perhaps, been supplied from England, and were therefore not entered in any official reckoning.

most serious character. The merchants of Antwerp felt that their intervention was not likely to be of much assistance; if Tyndale was to be rescued from the fate which seemed to menace him, it was necessary to invoke the aid of the great authorities at home. The rigorous edicts of Charles v. held out small prospect of escape, if the law was to have its due course; it was impossible to doubt that Tyndale had rendered himself liable to the penalties of the bloody statutes on many counts; it was idle to ask mercy from the pitiless Dufief or the inflexible emperor; there was no hope except in some vigorous remonstrance from Henry or Cromwell. The intelligence was accordingly conveyed to England; and an attempt seems to have been made to interest Cromwell and the sovereign in the design of securing Tyndale's deliverance by exercising their influence upon the government of the emperor in the Low Countries.

The time was certainly inauspicious. Henry and his ministers were completely engrossed in their domestic affairs. The great crisis, so long anticipated, had come; the first great irrevocable step in the grand religious and political movement had been taken; and Henry and Cromwell were watching the results with intense anxiety. Royal authority had been substituted for papal supremacy by Act of Parliament; but it remained to be seen how this measure would be received by that large and influential part of the nation, which had been accustomed to regard the supremacy of the pope as one of the most solemn articles of their religion. It was felt by the king and his advisers that everything depended upon the result; and they awaited with breathless eagerness the operation of the mighty change. Violent opposition was anticipated; and Henry was prepared to meet violence with violence. Smithfield again blazed with the fires of martyrdom; and the headsman was again busy with his bloody work. The laws against heretics, which for a time had been permitted to slumber, were again awakened into fresh violence; for Henry, while rejecting the yoke of papal authority, was

determined to exhibit, for the confusion of his enemies, unmistakable evidence that he had no intention of deviating into "heresy." Priests were executed for impugning the royal supremacy; laymen were burned for denying the Real Presence. At the very moment when the intelligence of Tyndale's arrest was conveyed to England, Cromwell was overwhelmed with the perplexity occasioned by the first great difficulty which he had been called upon to confront. Minor victims had been disposed of with little trouble; but there remained in prison two men whose disapprobation of Henry's proceedings was as notorious as that of those who had been already sent to the stake, but whose high character and prominent position might well "give pause" even to the most reckless statesman. That Cromwell was grievously perplexed how to act towards Sir Thomas More and Bishop Fisher, his own private memoranda, preserved in the British Museum, sufficiently show. To endure their conduct was impossible; to put the law in operation against them was to brave the censure of Europe, and to excite the inextinguishable hatred of their numerous friends and admirers in England.

From a minister thus surrounded on all sides by danger and perplexity, little active interest in Tyndale's misfortune was to be anticipated. Most inopportunely, therefore, everything seemed to conspire against him; a circumstance which had clearly not been overlooked by the astute enemies who had conspired to accomplish his arrest. Vaughan, who had shown himself so friendly to the Reformer, was absent in England; and Hackett, the representative in Brussels, had recently died, and was apparently not replaced by any successor. The head of the Company of English Merchants in Antwerp was indifferent. England was in bad odour with the emperor and the regent. Cromwell was busied with his own affairs, from which he scarcely dared to withdraw his attention. Henry was bent upon vindicating his orthodoxy, and was not likely, therefore, to intervene very heartily in behalf of one who was charged with heresy. Several subjects of the

Emperor had just been burned in Smithfield for heretical opinions; and the Imperial Government might consequently look upon the arrest and execution of Tyndale as a sort of allowable reprisals. The prospects were as gloomy as could be conceived; and in no quarter could any ray of hope be descried; yet Tyndale's friends did not abandon their efforts to save him.

Some directions on the subject seem to have been given to the emissaries of Cromwell on the Continent; and it is from one of them that we have received what information we possess of the proceedings at this period. Thomas Tebold, a godson of Cromwell, and apparently on terms of cordial intimacy both with his patron and with Cranmer, had been despatched to the Continent, presumably in the month of June, and seems to have been commissioned to make inquiries as to the arrest of Tyndale. His letters form a most valuable supplement to the narrative which has been already quoted from Foxe.

On the last day of July he thus writes to Cromwell from Antwerp:—[1]

"News here, at this time, be none, but that here is most earnest communication that the French Queen [Leonora, sister of the Emperor, Charles V.] and her sister the Queen of Hungary [the Regent of the Low Countries] shall meet together at Cambray now afore Michaelmas. All these Low Countries here be most earnest with the Bishop of Rome and his traditions; and therefore he hath now sweetly rewarded them, sending them his deceitful blessing, with remission of all their sins, so [on the condition that] they fast three days together, and this is given *gratis* without any money. Here is an evil market [a bad bargain for the pope], that whereas he was wont to sell his pardons by great suit and money, now he is glad to offer them for nothing. And yet a great

[1] *Galba*, B. x. The letter is dated the *last* day of July, the day, we may suppose, when it was finished and sent off; but the greater part seems to have been written on July 15th.

many make no haste to receive them where they be offered. I do hear of certain that the Bishop of Rome is contented, and doth desire to have a General Council, and that this matter is earnestly entreated of divers. I am sure, if this be truth, your lordship have heard of it or this time more at large.

"*He that did take Tyndale is abiding at Louvain, with whom I did there speak; which doth not only there rejoice of that act, but goeth about to do many more Englishmen like displeasure; and did advance this, I being present, with most railing words against our King, his Highness, calling him* 'Tyrannum ac expilatorem reipublicæ' [*tyrant and robber of the commonwealth*]. He is appointed to go shortly from Louvain to Paris in France, and there to tarry, because he feareth that English merchants that be in Antwerp will hire some men privily to do him some displeasure unawares."

The writer of the letter had been entrusted with some commissions from Cranmer, and in his communication with the archbishop he enters into greater detail concerning Tyndale's apprehension.

"Pleaseth it your Grace that I have delivered your letters unto Mr. Thomas Leigh [a merchant held in much esteem by Cranmer and Vaughan], which, according to your writing, hath delivered unto me twenty crowns of the [same], which money, God willing, I will deliver where your Grace hath assigned. Within these sixteen days I take my journey from Antwerp about the last day of July [letter begun, therefore, July 15th]. And because at my first arrivance to Antwerp I found company ready to go up withal to Cologne [on his way to Nuremberg], I went to see my old acquaintance at Louvain; whereas [where] I found Doctor Bockenham, sometime prior in the Black Friars in Cambridge, and another of his brethren with him. I had no leisure to commune long with them; but he showed me that at his departing from England he went straight to Edinburgh in Scotland, there continuing unto [Easter] last past [March

28]; and then came over to Louvain,[1] where he and his companions doth continue in the house of the Black Friars there; having little acquaintance [or] comfort but for their money; for they pay for their [meat] and drink a certain sum of money in the year. All succour that I can perceive them to have is only by *him which hath taken Tyndale*, called Harry Philips, with whom I had long and familiar communication, [for] I made him believe that I was minded to tarry and study at Louvain. I could not perceive the contrary by his communication, *but that Tyndale shall die;* which he doth follow, [*i.e.*, urge on], and procureth with all diligent endeavour, rejoicing much therein; saying that he had a commission out also for to have taken Doctor Barnes and *George Joye* with other. Then I showed him that it was conceived both in England and in Antwerp that George Joye should be [*i.e.*, had been] of counsel with him in taking of Tyndale; and he answered that he never saw George Joye to his knowledge, much less he should know him. This I do write, because George Joye is greatly blamed and abused among merchants, and many other that were his friends, falsely and wrongfully.

"But this foresaid Harry Phillips showed me that there

[1] I am able to give a more full account of Buckenham's movements than had come to the ears of Tebold. Buckenham, it may be premised, was the friar who attempted to reply to Latimer's famous *Sermons on the Cards* at Cambridge, and who was extinguished by the wit and raillery of his antagonist. (See Demaus' *Latimer*, pp. 77, etc.) On his way from Scotland to Louvain he had resided for some time in London; and in the State Paper Office I have found the following letter to Cromwell, complaining of Buckenham's seditious language:—"I William Bull, friar, knowledging myself as one of his Majesty's faithful subjects, to the uttermost of my power doth [*sic*] certify your goodness of one Doctor Buckenham, which passed the reme [*i.e.*, has gone out of the realm], full undiscreetly to the continuance of his mind, and aid of the abused Bishop of Rome. He hath, since the time of his departing, sent certain letters which were received of one Doctor Ellis, sometime prior of the Black Friars at Cambridge," etc.; the writer in fact suggests that the letters might be as offensive as his conversation had been, and hints that it was a matter which ought to be inquired into "for fear of a farther inconvenience." There is no date to the letter, which was written from the Black Friars in London; but its exact place in the narrative can be assigned with almost perfect certainty. *Chapter-house Papers.*

was no man of his counsel but a monk of Stratford Abbey, beside London [Stratford-le-Bow], called Gabriel Donne, which at that time was student at Louvain, and in house with this foresaid Harry Philips. But now within these five or six weeks he is come to England, and, by the help of Mr. Secretary, hath obtained an abbey of a thousand marks by the year in the west country.

"This said Philips is greatly afraid (in so much as I can perceive) that the English merchants that be in Antwerp will lay watch to do him some displeasure privily. Wherefore of truth he hath sold his books in Louvain, to the value of twenty marks' worth sterling, intending to go hence to Paris; and doth tarry here upon nothing but of the return of his *servant, which he has long since sent to England with letters. And by cause of his long tarrying, he is marvellously afraid lest he be taken and come into Master Secretary's handling, with his letters.* Either this Philips hath great friends in England to maintain him here; or else, as he showed me, he is well beneficed in the bishopric of Exeter. He raileth at Louvain and in the Queen of Hungary's Court most shamefully against our King his Grace and others [Cranmer and Cromwell probably]. For, I being present, he called our King his Highness, *tyrannum, expilatorem reipublicæ*, with many other railing words, rejoicing that he trusteth to see the emperor to scourge his Highness with his Council and friends. Also he saith that Mr. Secretary hath privily gone about matters here in Flanders and Brabant, which are secretly come to the knowledge of the Queen of Hungary, the Governess here, which she reckoneth, one day, at her pleasure and time, to declare to his rebuke. What this meaneth I cannot tell, neither I could hear no farther; but if I had tarried there any time I should have heard more," etc.

"Written at Antwerp the last day of July, by your bedeman and servant, ever to my small power,—Thomas Tebold.[1]"

[1] Cotton MSS., *Galba*, B. x.

In spite of the express assertion of Philips that "there was no man of his counsel but Gabriel Donne," it is impossible to read Theobald's letter without an increasing suspicion that the whole plot had been concocted in England; why else should the servant, who had been accessory to the arrest, be despatched so promptly with letters to England? and why should Philips be so agitated by the fear that both servant and letters had fallen into the hands of Cromwell? It is also equally evident that the plot had been devised entirely without the privity either of Henry or of any of his advisers; that in fact it was the device of what may be termed the "opposition party," and that it had been all along most carefully concealed from Cromwell. It was certainly not a little strange that Cromwell should in any way have been accessory to the rewarding of the only person who had shared with Philips in the treacherous design; but it is quite evident from the letters that it was in total ignorance of Donne's share,[1] real or alleged in the plot, that the Secretary had promoted him to the "abbey in the west country." It was to the Abbey of Buckfastleigh, in Devonshire, that this traitorous friar was appointed; Cromwell, doubtless, merely acceding to the wish of Donne's friends; and the mere fact of such a valuable preferment being bestowed seems to confirm the suspicion that the whole plot had originated with men of position and influence in England, who could substantially reward the services of their emissaries.

Poyntz and the other friendly Antwerp merchants were, of course, aware of Theobald's communications with Cromwell and Cranmer, and hoped that this might lead to the effectual intervention of the English sovereign in favour of the important captive. Indeed, it was reported in Antwerp that Henry had actually written in Tyndale's favour to the Government of the Low Countries; but in all probability the "wish was father to the thought." Poyntz waited in

[1] [In the *Oxford Register*, p. 121, this entry occurs; "Dunne, Gabriel, Cistercian, supplicated for B.D., 26 October 1521." EDITOR.]

hope till his patience was completely exhausted; and then on the 25th of August he wrote to his brother, John Poyntz, of Ockenden, in Essex, who had been long in the royal household, and was therefore likely to have access to the King; and his letter contains an interesting testimony of Tyndale's character from one who had unusual opportunities of judging.[1]

"Brother, the [cause] of my writing to you at this time is, as seems to me, for a great matter concerning to the King's Grace. For though I am herein [in Antwerp] abiding, yet of very natural love to the country that I was born in, so also for the oath and obedience the which every true subject is bound by the law of God to have to his prince, compels me to write that thing [which I] know or perceive might be prejudicial or hurtful to his most noble Grace; which may come through counsel of them that seek to bring their own appointments to pass, under colour of pretending the King's honour, and yet be as the thorns under a goodly rose; I might say very traitors in their hearts, reckoning at length to bring their purpose to pass, as they have always done, through such means. Who they be, I name no man, but it is good to perceive it must be the Papists, which have always been the deceivers of the world, by their craft and juggling. For whereas it was said here the King had granted his gracious letters in the favour of one *William Tyndale*, for to have been sent hither; *the which is in prison and like to suffer death*, except it be through his gracious help; it is thought those letters be stopped. This man was lodged with me three quarters of a year, and was taken out of my house by a sergeant-of-arms, otherwise called a *dore-wardore*, and the Procureur-General of Brabant; the *which was done by procurement out of England*, and, as I suppose, unknown to the King's Grace till it was done. For I know well, if it had pleased his Grace to have sent him a commandment to come into England, he would not have disobeyed it, to have put his

[1] Cotton MSS., *Galba*, B. x.: a few words are destroyed.

life in jeopardy [*i. e.*, even if obedience had exposed his life to danger]. But now these privy lurkers, perceiving that his Grace, of his entire will would have sent for him [so at least Poyntz imagined], by the means whereof, it is to be thought, they fear that if his Grace (as no doubt but his abundant goodness is such, he would) charitably hear him, then it might be the frowardest fate for their purpose they went about. Wherefore it is presupposed that they have solicited this to his Grace or to his Council; that the putting to death of this man here, in this country, might be to the King's high honour, making greatly for his purpose in time to come, when his matter [*i. e.*, the divorce] shall be disputed, if it come thereto.[1] Wherefore, if it be their persuading, they know themselves it can stand in none effect to [their] purpose, but might be greatly against his Grace, in that and other things. Whether this be their device, or be what other mischievous mean [?] I cannot tell; but be whatsoever it be, if a poor man might and durst boldly reason with them, I think if they had either fear of God, their Prince, or shame of the world, they should be [ashamed] ever they did go about to procure such a thing. For they would that the King should highly favour them, because they can prevent such things for his Grace, and be the means whereof they may come to high promotions and stand fast in them; and so as they may bring that to pass they care not. . . . When these crafty fellows meet they do jest and pout at him that they have so cleanly deceived, and though afterward it be known, yet they care not, for it shall be reckoned, among such as they be, for great wisdom. Wherefore they be past shame, and the party past his remedy. But a poor man that has no promotion, nor looks for none, having no quality whereby he might obtain honour, but of a very natural zeal, and fear of God and his Prince had lever [rather] live a beggar all days

[1] All this, it must again be repeated, is mere conjecture on Poyntz' part: he was disappointed at what seemed the indifference of the English authorities, and he frames this theory to explain it.

of his life, and put himself in jeopardy to die, rather than to live and see those lying [leering?] counsellors to have their purpose; for some men perceive more than they can express by words, the which sorrow it inwardly till they see remedy.

"And by the means that this poor man, *William Tyndale*, hath lain in my house three-quarters of a year, I know that the King has never a truer-hearted subject to his Grace this day living; and for that he does know that he is bound by the law of God to obey his Prince, I wot it well, he would not do the contrary, to be made lord of the world, howsoever the King's Grace be informed. But what care these papists for that? For their pomps and high authority has always been holden up, by murder and shedding the blood of innocents, causing princes, by one mean or other, to consent with them to the same.

"Brother, about eighteen or twenty years agone, they at Rome, to magnify the King's Grace in his style [his titles], gave him the name 'Defender of the Faith.' The which may be likened to the prophecy of Caiaphas when he said, 'It is expedient for us that one man die for the people, that all do not perish.' That prophecy was true, but yet contrary to his meaning. So likewise, they thought by the mean thereof [*i.e.*, of the title], he should be a great maintainer of their abominations. Howbeit, God, the which sees all things, has entered his Grace with the right battle, according to that style, as never prince has done so nobly since Christ died; in the which I beseech God give him victory: and that his Grace be not persuaded to let be undone what might greatly prevail thereto [to victory], by the death of this man, [which] should be a great hindrance to the Gospel, and, to the enemies of it, one of the highest pleasures. But and it would please the King's Highness to send for this man, so that he might dispute his articles with them at large, which they lay to him, it might by the mean thereof, be so opened to the Court and the Council of this country, that they would be at another

point with the Bishop of Rome, within a short space. And I think he [*Tyndale*] *shall be shortly at a point to be condemned;* for there are two Englishmen at Louvain that do and have applied it sore, taking great pains to translate out of English into Latin those things that may make against him; so that the clergy here may understand it, and to condemn him, as they have done all others, for keeping opinions contrary to their business, the which they call 'the order of Holy Church.'

"Brother, the knowledge that I have of this man causes me to write as my conscience bids me: for the King's Grace should have of him, at this day, as high a treasure as of any one man living that has been of no greater reputation. Therefore I desire you that this matter may be solicited to his Grace for this man, with as good effect as shall be in you, or by your means to be done; for, in my conscience, there be not many [perfecter] men this day living, as knows God. Brother, I think if that Walter Marsch, now being governor [of the merchant adventurers in Antwerp], had done his duty effectually here at this time, there would have been a remedy found for this man. There be many men care not for a matter, so as they may do aught to make their own seem fair, in avoiding themselves that they be not spied."

It is not impossible that it was this letter which at last compelled the English authorities to move. Cromwell, however, must have known that the matter was by no means so simple as it seemed to the sanguine judgment of Poyntz. From the ordinary course of law nothing could be hoped; the statutes were clear and inflexibly rigorous; it was not doubtful that Tyndale's writings contained many statements which the theologians of the day would condemn as heretical; it was difficult to see on what grounds the English sovereign could intervene; and it was only from the special favour of the authorities in the Low Countries that any possibility of escape could be derived. This only hope Cromwell was willing to try.

Within a few days of the dispatch of Poyntz' letter, letters were prepared for two of the most influential members of the Imperial Government, Carondolet, Archbishop of Palermo, the President of the Council, and the Marquis of Bergen-op-Zoom. These letters before being dispatched were submitted to the judgment of the man in England best acquainted with the policy of the Low Countries, Stephen Vaughan, who, on the 4th of September, acknowledges the receipt of Cromwell's "two letters devised for Tyndale," which he promised to send to Flanders with all speed; adding, with a true appreciation of the gravity of the case, "it were good the King had one living in Flanders that were a man of reputation."[1] Cromwell's letters have not been preserved, or, at least, have not been recovered, but it is not very difficult to conjecture what must have been their tenor. The admirers of Tyndale have inveighed against the coolness and indifference of Henry and his ministers; but, in truth, however much Henry and Cromwell may have sympathised with the Reformer in his misfortunes, they had positively no ground whatever on which to interfere in his behalf, and would only have precipitated his fate by the active interference which the Reformer's biographers have counselled. Nothing could be demanded as a matter of right except that Tyndale should have a legal trial: the only hope of escape lay in propitiating the favour of the Marquis of Bergen and the Archbishop of Palermo. With both personages Cromwell had been associated in many friendly relations: a few months before, the English Secretary and the Archbishop had been named joint executors of the ambassador Hackett;[2] and from the friendship of two men of such influence in the Low Countries some effectual intervention might be hoped for.

The letters were sent to an English merchant in Antwerp, Robert Flegge, who was occasionally a correspondent of

[1] *Publications of the Record Office*, 27 Henry VIII. p. 91.

[2] So it is stated in a letter of Thomas Leigh, Cotton MSS., *Galba*, B. x.

Cromwell,[1] and from him we have the following account of the manner in which they were forwarded to their destination :— "Pleaseth it your Mastership to understand that, the tenth day of this present month of September, was brought to me, by one George Collins, two letters sent by your Mastership as he reported, the one thereof directed to the Marquis of Barough [*i. e.*, Bergen-op-Zoom], and the other to the Bishop [should be the Archbishop] of Palermo. And when I understood that the said letters came from your Mastership, I did my best diligence to make inquiry whether the said lords were in the Court or not. Then I was informed that the Marquis of Barough was departed two days before, towards Dutchland [Germany], as governor and ruler of the Princess of Denmark, to conduct her to her husband the Palsgrave. And as I understood that he was so departed, then I could do no less, supposing that the said letters were of importance; so have I sent one of our merchants [Poyntz, as will appear] after him with the said letters for the more surety to be delivered, and to bring the answer thereof. Also I have written to the said Lord Marquis a letter, desiring him that in case there were in your said letters any matter of charge that your Mastership required to be done by him, then I desired him right humbly that he would vouchsafe to write to such of his friends in the Court, the which should do for you as much in his absence as [if] he were there present in person, in all such causes as your Mastership should have to do before the Queen of Hungary and the Council.

"Whereupon I have received a letter from the said Lord

[1] On the 5th of September he had written to Cromwell an account of a "slanderous sermon" preached by a Black Friar in Antwerp, on the previous Sunday, August 29th. The Sunday was the feast of the Decollation of John the Baptist; and the preacher, in illustrating the Gospel for the day, had boldly compared Henry and Anne Boleyn to Herod and Herodias' daughter. Flegge remonstrated with the prior of the monastery, and by dint of determination and perseverance, he compelled the friar to appear again in the same pulpit the succeeding Sunday, and recant and apologise for the insults which he had offered to the King and Queen of England. See Cotton MSS., *Galba*, B. x. Can this have been another escapade of our old acquaintance, Doctor Buckenham?

Marquis, wherein he writeth me that he is very sorry that it is his chance to be absent from the Court at this time, so that he cannot do for the King's Highness and for you such service as his good mind and will is to do; and according to the tenor of your said letter also, he wrote me in his said letter that, according to my desire, he had written to his great friend the Bishop of Palermo, concerning your causes, in everything that he should for his sake in his absence do therein like as the matter extended to his own person; for he is the man that may do most in this matter of any other resident in the Court at this present time. And so is come from my Lord the man that I sent the letters by, the bringer hereof, and brought with him both your letters and the Lord Marquis's, and delivered them to the said Lord of Palermo; desiring him of [*i.e.*, for] his loving answer and expedition of the same. Whereupon the Lord of Palermo spake with the Queen and the Council; and thereupon hath made you such answer by writing as this bringer shall deliver you; the which I pray God may be to the King's pleasure and yours . . . . At Antwerp, the 22nd day of September, Anno 1535."[1]

Circumstances, it will be perceived, still seemed to conspire against Tyndale. Of Cromwell's friends only one was present on the spot to be of any service, and he the one who from education and profession was least likely to exercise his influence in the Reformer's favour. Flegge's letter, it is clear, was not written in any spirit of confidence; there was nothing, indeed, to encourage any sanguine anticipations of success; and the cautious merchant could venture no higher than a *hope* that the letters which he transmitted to Cromwell might be to "*the King's* pleasure and his," a plain indication, it may be remarked in passing, that Cromwell had not moved in the matter without Henry's consent. Poyntz, indefatigable in his efforts to save the life of his friend, had been employed to carry Cromwell's letters to the Marquis of Bergen, and his

[1] Cotton MSS., *Galba*, B. x. The letter has been printed in a very mutilated form in Anderson's *Annals*, Vol. I. p. 429.

account, preserved in Foxe, is even more despondent in its tone than that of Flegge. It is needless to make any pretensions to originality where every detail must be borrowed from the Martyrologist; and the reader will doubtless prefer to peruse the narrative in the simple phraseology in which Foxe has related it from the information of Poyntz himself:—

"Not long after [the dispatch of letters from the Antwerp merchants soliciting the intervention of Henry], letters were directed out of England to the Council at Brussels, [to two chief members of the Council], and sent to the Merchants Adventurers at Antwerp, commanding them to see that with speed they should be delivered. Then such of the chiefest of the merchants as were there at that time, being called together, required the said Poyntz to take in hand the delivery of those letters, with letters also from them in the favour of Master Tyndale, to the Lord of Barrowe and others; the which Lord of Barrowe (as it was told Poyntz by the way) at that time was departed from Brussels, as the chiefest conductor of the eldest daughter of the King of Denmark to be married to the Palsgrave, whose mother was sister to the Emperor, she being chief Princess of Denmark; who, after he heard of his departure, did ride after, the next [nearest] way, and overtook him at Akon,[1] where he delivered to him his letters; the which when he had received and read, he made no direct answer, but somewhat objecting said, 'There were of their countrymen that were burned in England, not long before [May 25];' as indeed there were Anabaptists burnt in Smithfield; and so Poyntz said to him, 'Howbeit,' said he, 'whatsoever the crime was, if his Lordship or any other nobleman had written, requiring to have had them, he thought they should not have been denied.' 'Well,' said he, 'I have no leisure to write; for the Princess is ready to ride.' Then said Poyntz, 'If it shall please your Lordship, I will attend upon you unto the next baiting-place;' which was at Maestricht. 'If you so do,' said the Lord, 'I will advise

[1] Akon, that is, Alken, about fifteen miles from Maestricht.

myself by the way what to write.' So Poyntz followed him from Akon [Alken] to Maestricht, the which are fifteen English miles asunder; and there he received letters of him, one to the Council there [*i.e.*, in Brussels], another to the Company of the Merchants Adventurers, and another also to the Lord Cromwell. So Poyntz rode from thence to Brussels, and then and there delivered to the Council the letters out of England, with the Lord of Barrowe's letters also; and received eftsoons answer into England of the same by letters, which he brought to Antwerp to the English merchants, who required him to go with them into England; and he, very desirous to have Master Tyndale out of prison, let not for to take pains, with loss of time in his own business and occupying; but diligently followed with the said letters, which he there delivered to the Council, and was commanded by them to tarry until he had other letters, of the which he was not dispatched thence in a month after, [*i.e.*, not till the end of October]. At length, the letters being delivered him, he returned again, and delivered them to the Emperor's Council at Brussels, and there tarried for answer of the same.

"When the said Poyntz had tarried three or four days, it was told him, of one that belonged to the chancery, that Master Tyndale should have been delivered to him according to the tenor of the letters; but Philips, being there, followed the suit against Master Tyndale, and hearing that he should be delivered to Poyntz, and doubting lest he should be put from his purpose, he knew none other remedy but to accuse Poyntz, saying that he was a dweller in the town of Antwerp, and there had been a succourer of Tyndale, and was one of the same opinion, and that all this was only his own labour and suit, to have Master Tyndale at liberty, and no man's else.

"Thus, upon his information and accusation, Poyntz was attached by the Procureur-General, and delivered to the keeping of two serjeants-of-arms; and the same evening was sent to him one of the chancery with the Procureur-General, who ministered unto him an oath, that he should truly make

answer to all such things as should be inquired of him; thinking they would have had no other examinations of him, but of his message. The next day likewise they came again, and had him in examination, and so five or six days, one after another, upon not so few as an hundred articles, as well of the King's affairs as of the message concerning Tyndale, of his aiders and of his religion. Out of the which examinations the Procureur-General drew twenty-three or twenty-four articles, and declared the same against the said Poyntz; the copy whereof he delivered to him to make answer thereunto, and permitted him to have an advocate and proctor. And order was taken, that eight days after he should deliver unto them his answer; and from eight days to eight days to proceed, till the process were ended; also that he should send no messenger to Antwerp, where his house was, nor to any other place but by the post of the town of Brussels; nor to send any letters, nor any to be delivered to him, but written in Dutch [Flemish]; and the Procureur-General, who was party against him, to read them, to peruse, and examine them thoroughly, contrary to all right and equity, before they were sent or delivered. Neither might any be suffered to speak or talk with Poyntz in any other tongue or language, except only in the Dutch tongue, so that his keepers, who were Dutchmen, might understand what the contents of the letters or talk should be; saving that at one certain time the provincial of the White Friars came to dinner where Poyntz was prisoner, and brought with him a young novice, being an Englishman, whom the provincial, after dinner, of his own accord did bid to talk with the said Poyntz, and so with him he was licensed to talk. The purpose and great policy therein was easy to be perceived.

"Between Poyntz and the novice was much pretty talk, as of Sir Thomas More, and of the Bishop of Rochester, and of their putting to death; whose death he [the novice] seemed greatly to lament, especially dying in such a quarrel, worthy, as he said, to be accounted for martyrs; with other noble

doctrine, and deep learning in divinity, meet to feed swine withal [this is Foxe's remark, not Poyntz']: such blindness then in those days reigned amongst them.

"The eighth day, the commissioners that were appointed came to the house where Poyntz was kept, to have had his answer in writing. He, making no great haste in proceeding, answereth them with a dilatory, saying, he was there a prisoner, and might not go abroad, so as, although he have appointed and named who to be a counsel with him, they came not to him, nor he could not go to them; 'nor none may come to give counsel in this matter, but such as be licensed and named by you.' Then they gave him a day to make answer against the next eighth day. And Poyntz drew his own mind [stated his own opinions], answering to the whole declaration generally; the which, at the next coming, he delivered them: but that answer they would not take, saying he must answer to every article particularly: and so they took order that he should make it ready against the next coming, thus he trifled them off from Hallowtide [November 1] until Christmas-even, with dilatories from eighth day to eighth day. And upon Christmas-even, in the morning, they came to him to have had answer, the which was not made, nor any counsel came to him in all that time; howbeit they would delay the time no longer, but said they, 'Bring in your answer this day, or else ye shall be put from it.' So he perceived that if it were not brought in that night he should have been condemned without answer. So then, with much ado, he got the advocate to help him in ordering of his answer; but it was long or [ere] he came, so that it was past eight o'clock of Christmas-even before his answer were delivered to the Procureur-General. And then after, as the time served, at the days appointed, went forth with replication duplic, [answers, and replies to answers] with other answers each to other, in writing what they could in answering to the Emperor's ordinances. And at such time as the commissioners came to Poyntz, that traitor Philips accompanied them to the

door in following the process against him, *as he also did against Master Tyndale,* as they who had Poyntz in keeping showed him.

"The process being ended, as the order is there, either party delivered up to the commissioners a bag, with his process in writing, and took an inventory of every parcel [piece] of writing that was within the bag. So it rested in their hands: but upon sentence, Poyntz required in the time of process, that he might put in surety and to be at liberty: the which they granted him at the first time; but afterwards they denied to take surety for his body. And then [*i.e.*, at the first time when they were willing to take security] he sent a post from the town of Brussels [where he was confined] to Antwerp to the English merchants, thinking they would not let him have stick for lack of their help in putting in surèties for him, considering the cause with the circumstance; and for that they put him thereto themselves [*i.e.*, they had themselves set him to that work], although they had [*i.e.*, as they declared] made him no promise for his charges and pains taken, as Poyntz reporteth of them that they did indeed, the which as yet he hath to make it appear [*i.e.*, he can still show written proof that they had promised to defray his charges].

"But, to pass over this and to make the matter short; if the foresaid merchants such as were of the town of Antwerp had, at the time, been surety for him, then the matter had been altered from crime to civil; but when Poyntz had delivered to them his answer, they demanded of him for his charges [expenses of keeping him], money or sureties. The charges was much to reckon for the two officers' meat and drink and wages, besides his own charges; so as it was about five shillings every day. For all the while he was prisoner, he was not in a common prison, but in the keeping of two officers in one of their houses. So they demanded sureties to be brought within eight days for the charges; but then they denied him to take surety for his body [*i.e.*, declined to

release him on bail] to make answer at liberty. Poyntz, considering that they altered in their purposes, as well by more [*i. e.*, in other particulars] as in that; and perceiving by other things, as also it was told in secret, it would have cost him his life if he had tarried; yet Poyntz granted them to put in sureties, requiring of them to have a messenger to send: not for that he reckoned to have any, but to make dilatory, or else they would have sent him to a stronger prison. But Poyntz delayed them, thinking, if he could, to make a scape; yet he did make a good face, as though he reckoned to have been in no danger, which if he had not so done, it was very unlike he should have escaped with his life out of their hands. And at the eighth day, the commissioners came again to Poyntz, and there received both their bags, with the process, one of the Procureur-General and one of Poyntz, delivering either of them an inventory of such pieces of writing as were delivered in the bags; and demanded sureties of Poyntz, according to the order they took when they were last with him. Poyntz alleged that he had divers times required them which had him in keeping to get him a messenger; as he also had done, but made no great haste to have any, for he reckoned it should be a sufficient dilatory, whereby to have another day. And with such alleging of the impossibility for that he could get no messenger to send forth, at the last they put him apart and agreed to give him a day eight days after, and called him in again, and commanded the officer to get him one; as they did. And so Poyntz sent him with letters to the English merchants, the which at that time were at Barrow [at the fairs probably]. Howbeit he reckoned to prove [*i. e.*, to try] to get away before the return again of the messenger, for he perceived his tarrying there should have been his death; and therefore, to put in a venture to get away, and so he might save himself; for if he had been taken [in his attempt to escape], it would have been but death, for he had been prisoner there in their hands at that time about twelve or thirteen weeks. So he tarried not the coming again

of the messenger, but, in a night, by a mean, he conveyed himself, and so by God's help, at the opening of the town gate in the morning gat away. And when it was perceived that he was gone, there was horse sent out after him, but by the means that he knew well the country, he escaped and came into England."[1]

Such was the abortive termination of Poyntz' determined effort to save the life of Tyndale. To rescue his friend from the danger that threatened him, he had spared no pains, and he had shrunk from no peril. Disregarding his own mercantile pursuits, he had been during the months of September and October completely engrossed in furthering the efforts of Cromwell to procure Tyndale's release. The whole labour of communicating with the Marquis of Barrow and the Council at Brussels had been devolved upon him, and he had cheerfully undertaken it. We are disposed to believe that he was misled by his own ardent wishes when he imagined that there was any real prospect of Tyndale's release; but it is clear that he was the soul of all the attempts that were made to procure the Reformer's liberty. No other was willing to undergo labour or loss, or to incur personal dangers; and when he was imprisoned all active efforts to release Tyndale seem to have been suspended if not abandoned. Everything, it will be seen, still combined to make the prospects of Tyndale's escape as gloomy as possible. The English sovereign, it must be repeated, had no legitimate ground for interfering; and his conduct in executing several of the Emperor's subjects for heresy was, of course, a fatal obstacle to the success of his intervention in the present instance, however earnestly he might plead for mercy. The Regent of the Low Countries was evidently offended at Cromwell's foreign policy; the Archbishop of Palermo and the Marquis of Barrow were too skilful courtiers to sacrifice the goodwill of the Emperor by extending their patronage to a "heretic;" and the arrest of Poyntz completed the overthrow of Tyndale's hopes by

[1] Foxe: first edition.

removing from the scene the most active and energetic of all his friends.

The narrative of Poyntz' proceedings has been given at full length, notwithstanding the somewhat prolix and uninteresting style in which Foxe has related it, partly as a fitting tribute to the disinterested friend who so nobly adventured his own life to save that of Tyndale, and partly because it contains numerous and authentic details of the customary process in trials for heresy, which are doubly interesting in the absence of any contemporary account of the trial of the illustrious translator. Poyntz seems to have been imprisoned for nearly four months, from the middle of November 1535, to the middle of March 1536; and among the Archives of the Council of Brabant there is still preserved one interesting souvenir of his escape, in the shape of a fine of eighty pounds inflicted upon his jailer, John Baers, for having, through "carelessness and negligence," allowed him to break out and get away.[1] On his escape he returned to England, and doubtless watched for any opportunity of again renewing his efforts for Tyndale's release; but all was vain. Cromwell had done what he could, without effect; and Henry was too busy in the pursuit of his matrimonial adventures to listen to any proposals for interesting himself once more in the Reformer's favour. In the first year of the reign of Edward VI. Poyntz succeeded his brother John in his Manor of North Ockenden, in Essex, and here he resided till 1562; but he never forgot his association with Tyndale, and his epitaph records the dangers to which he had been exposed by his zeal for the cause of the Gospel, and gratefully recognises the Divine Providence which saved him from imminent death.[2]

[1] The original will be found with the other Flemish documents in the Appendix: and I have to express my obligations for the discovery of this small but not uninteresting fact, which so completely corroborates the narrative of Foxe, to the kind courtesy of M. Piot of the Archives, Brussels.

[2] "Hic pro fidelissimo principis sui servitio, ac ardentissimâ evangelicæ veritatis professione, vincula et incarcerationes in transmarinis regionibus passus est, adeo ut cædi jam planè destinatus esset, nisi Divinâ fretus providentiâ occasione e carcere

To return to Tyndale, thus left helpless in Vilvorde, it is evident that his trial had been considerably delayed by the difficulty of procuring evidence against him. Doubtless Dufief had seized among his books many of the prohibited works of the German Reformers, the possession of which would expose him to the penalties of the persecuting edicts of Charles V.; but it was further deemed necessary to procure evidence of his heretical opinions from his own writings, and as these were exclusively in English, they were inaccessible to the theologians of the Low Countries. Some considerable time, therefore, must have been spent in translating Tyndale's works from English into Latin; but, this once accomplished, the Doctors of Louvain would not have much difficulty in selecting passages that were inconsistent with the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome. *The Wicked Mammon*, *The Obedience*, *The Practice of Prelates*, *The Answer to Sir Thomas More*, abounded with doctrinal statements which the Church of Rome had frequently condemned as heresy, and still more with sharp and sweeping denunciations of rites and ordinances which the Church maintained to be laudable and edifying. It was an easy task, therefore, to draw up articles against him, such as would leave little doubt of the issue of a trial conducted by Romanists, bound to judge by the recognised standards of Romish teaching.

By the ordinances of the Emperor the trial of cases of heresy was withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the ordinary local magistrates, and was assigned to special commissioners nominated by the Emperor himself or his representative, and generally consisting of some of the members of the Council of Brabant, some local authorities, and a few theologians, to aid the laymen by their special knowledge of the subjects controverted.[1] In the case of Tyndale, the commission was

mirificè sibi prospexisset." See the family history at greater length in Anderson's *Annals*, Vol. I. pp. 524, etc.

[1] In May, 1534, exactly a year before Tyndale's arrest, the sheriffs of Mons had addressed a remonstrance to the Emperor against what they considered the

nominated by the Regent, Mary of Hungary, and the names of its chief members, hitherto unsuspected in England, we are now fortunately able to give from official documents.[1]

From the Council of Brabant, the customary number of four members was selected, Godefroid de Meyère, Charles T'Serraets, Theobald Cotereau, and Jacques Boonen; some local dignitaries, probably from Antwerp, were added; and four theologians completed the list. These last were taken from the neighbouring University of Louvain, then, as now, the great head-quarters and metropolis of the Catholicism of the Low Countries; and two of their number, the chief opponents of Tyndale, were men of sufficient reputation to justify a short sketch of their history and character.

Foremost among the accusers of Tyndale, and most unrelenting in his opposition to him, was Ruwart Tapper, Doctor of Theology, Chancellor of the University of Louvain, and Dean of the chief church of the city, that noble Church of St. Peter whose unfinished and half-ruinous tower forms such a picturesque contrast to the exquisite beauty of the Hôtel de Ville which lies at its base. Born at Enkhuisen, in Holland, about 1488, and therefore nearly of the same age as Tyndale, he had distinguished himself at the University of Louvain by his devotion to the study of theology, and speedily acquired a great reputation for learning in this department. "His house," says an admirer, "was the oracle of the whole of Belgium;" and when he was subsequently sent to assist in the deliberation of the Council of Trent, he was, out of compliment to his learning,

extravagant assumptions of the special commissioners appointed to try heretics, who claimed the right of judging without the intervention of the local magistrates. Charles, however, would not accede to the prayer of their letter, but reiterated his appointment that the commissioners should enjoy the powers which they claimed: he at the same time seems so far to have modified his opinion as usually to join a few of the local magistrates with the commissioners. *Mémoires d'Eusinas: Pièces Justificatives*, No. 1. The ordinary form of an ordinance for nominating a commission for the trial of heretics is given in the same volume, in the original Flemish, with a translation, p. 290.

[1] The document is among the Archives in the Chambre des Comptes at Brussels; and is given in the Appendix, in the original, with a translation.

usually asked to deliver his opinions immediately after the pontifical theologians. But above everything he was conspicuous for his untiring and unsparing zeal in opposing and suppressing the encroachments of Protestantism. This was the one great purpose of his life. The only reformation that was needed, in his opinion, was the strict and relentless enforcement of the discipline which the ancient canons of the Church had enacted. He hated all novelty; and he spared none who presumed to diverge, in doctrine or practice, from the narrow groove of the Church's traditions. Even his panegyrists admit that he was commonly charged with extreme severity; and he is said to have openly avowed the maxim, "It is no great matter, whether they that die on account of religion be guilty or innocent, provided we terrify the people by such examples; which generally succeeds best when persons eminent for learning, riches, nobility, or high station, are thus sacrificed." It was in the spirit of this abominable maxim that he acted; and from such a man Tyndale had little mercy to expect. His portrait, arrayed in his robes as Chancellor of the University, still hangs on the walls of the entrance-hall of the Library at Louvain; and the narrow intolerant face presents to the eye, even of an unpractised physiognomist, indisputable confirmation of the popular theory of his character. He looks the *beau-idéal* of an inquisitor; and, indeed, within a few months of Tyndale's death, and probably by way of reward for his prominent share in that transaction, he was appointed by the pope Chief Inquisitor in the Low Countries; and the annals of his achievements in this capacity were written in terrible characters of blood and fire, which long secured for his memory an unhappy notoriety.[1]

[1] I have thought it not undesirable, for the purpose of the biography, to insert this notice of the character of a man so intimately connected with Tyndale's trial and death, and who, though well known in the literature of the Low Countries, seems absolutely unknown in England. Materials for a life of him may be found in Foppens, Miræus, Lindanus, and others; and a very readable, though of course extravagantly panegyrical *éloge*, was inserted in the *Annuaire de l'Université Catholique de Louvain* for 1854. Tapper died of chagrin, it is said, at the

With Ruwart Tapper was associated one even more celebrated for his skill in theological dialectics, Jacques Masson or Lathomus. A native of Hainault, and some thirteen years older than Tapper, he had at first prosecuted his studies at the University of Paris. He subsequently, however, removed to Louvain, where he took his degree of Doctor of Theology in 1519, with the greatest *éclat*, the whole of the expense being defrayed by the zeal of his scholars "A pigmy in body, he was," says a modern enthusiastic student of Louvain, "a giant in intellect." He was the very impersonation of scholasticism; a subtle, hard-headed Doctor of the schools, whom no theological refinements could perplex, and no antagonist could silence. His grim and austere portrait impresses the beholder with the idea that he must have been a merciless enemy, and such is the character given of him by some of the contemporary Protestants of the Low Countries. It is only justice, however, to Lathomus, to admit that in his controversy with Tyndale he exhibits none of that bitterness and ferocity then only too common in all theological debates. Possibly this may have been owing to the favourable impression which Tyndale's transparent simplicity and honesty seem to have made on all who came into personal contact with him; indeed, if we may believe contemporary authorities, Tyndale's words produced a deep and ineffaceable result on the mind of Lathomus; and in his last moments he was overwhelmed with regret at the recollection of the part which he had then undertaken to play.[1]

cavalier treatment he received from Philip II., and was buried in the choir of his church at Louvain: his monument has long since disappeared, and his epitaph exists only in the pages of Foppens. He bequeathed his library to the University, and I at one time hoped to find some of Tyndale's missing papers among his collection; but all has long since been carried off. I must not omit to express my gratitude for the courtesy of the Rev. Professor Ruesens, the librarian of the University.

[1] I repeat the anecdote without vouching for its truth. "Jacobus Lathomus, omnium theologorum Lovaniensium, sine controversiâ, princeps, posteaquam stultâ et puerili concione quam Bruxellæ habuit coram Imperatore, se toti aulæ ridendum exhibuisset, mox ubi Lovanium rediit, pernicioso quodam furore correptus, cœpit insanire, ac in ipsâ etiam publicâ prælectione voces edere plenas despera-

Pierre Dufief, the Procureur-General, was almost officially bound to be rigorous and severe in the prosecution of heretics; he was certainly doubly interested in procuring a conviction, for he thus at once secured the favour of the Emperor, and obtained a share in the confiscated goods of the condemned. Contemporaries who suffered, themselves or their friends, from his rigour, have painted him in terrible colours; Ensinas, who had too good reason for knowing him, calls him "a bloody beast," "a man whose cruelty was equal to his wickedness:" and modern historians are inclined to believe that these charges, though probably exaggerated, rest on a foundation of fact.[1] It was he that was entrusted with the prosecution of Tyndale, as it was he that had, by an unworthy stratagem, seized him at Antwerp; and it was not likely that in such hands the trial would be characterised by any excessive clemency to the unfortunate prisoner.

The records of the inquisitions for heresy in the Low Countries of that period have in general been preserved among the Archives of Belgium. The Court proceeded with the customary forms of law, and all its transactions were recorded with the ordinary copiousness of legal documents. Beyond any question, this practice was followed in the process against Tyndale; but hitherto the most careful research has failed to discover this official contemporary account of his trial. It does not exist among the records of the Council of Brabant at Brussels;[2] it may have been, for some special reasons,

tionis atque impietatis. Quod cum cæteri theologi animadvertissent, præcipue Ruardus Enchusanus [*i. e.*, Tapper], homo miserabili balbutie, et crudelitate atque impietate inauditâ, apprehenderunt furentem Lathomum, eumque domi clausum tenuerunt. Ab eo tempore usque ad postremum spiritum nihil aliud clamavit Lathomus quam 'se condemnatum esse, se a Deo rejectum esse, nec ullam spem salutis aut veniæ sibi amplius esse reliquam, ut qui veritatem agnitam impugnâsset.'" This anecdote, which undoubtedly refers to Tyndale, is given by H. Janssen, in his *Jacobus Præpositus*, on the authority of Diaz.

[1] *Mémoires d'Ensinas*, p. 95. M. Campan, the editor, admits that there are good grounds for the accusation: and M. Galesloot believes that he was compelled to resign his office for extortion and peculation: *La Dame de Grand-Bigard*, p. 22.

[2] The Archives at Brussels have been carefully searched by M. Galesloot, whose

destroyed; or it may have been removed and lost in the confusion incident to a country which has had four changes of masters since Tyndale's time; but it does not seem absurd to hope that it may yet be by some happy accident recovered. Meantime, in the absence of this actual authentic record of the trial, *as it was*, we are compelled to describe it as it *may have been.* And for this purpose materials of unquestionable authority fortunately exist in abundance. The narrative of Poyntz, as given by Foxe, makes sufficiently clear the general order that was observed; records of similar trials have been preserved; and, what is of special value, we possess authentic accounts by an eye-witness, of trials conducted by the same prosecutor, aided by the same theologians, before some of the same judges, for the same offence, only seven years after Tyndale's martyrdom, and therefore so closely corresponding in most of the essential circumstances, that they may be employed with confidence to fill up the meagre outline which alone has come down to us of the last scenes of the great Reformer's life.[1]

The following description, for example, of the trial of a priest for heresy, may with scarce a single variation be received as applicable to Tyndale. "To inspire terror into the people, it was resolved to produce the accused in public. For this purpose a large hall in the castle was prepared, in the midst of which a platform of some elevation was erected, that the people might the more easily witness what was to be transacted. And as the judges were apprehensive of disturbance from the bystanders, who were somewhat inclined to the opinions of the Reformers, and were well aware that they were

article on Tyndale in the *Revue Trimestrielle* might well put to shame the ignorant presumption of many of Tyndale's countrymen.

[1] I refer to the *Memoirs of Ensinas*, published by the Historical Society of Belgium, under the editorial care of M. Campan, and provided with an ample appendix of illustrative documents of great interest and unquestionable authority. I make no apology for referring so frequently to a work of so much value, especially as it is of extreme rarity. The work of Pantaleon in which it appeared in the sixteenth century is not to be found either in the British Museum or in the Bodleian.

hated by the common people, they procured the assistance of the magistrates to protect them with an armed guard. When all preparations were finished, the unfortunate accused was led on to the platform, accompanied by a crowd of armed men: a man of diminutive stature, with a long beard, pale, thin, almost exhausted by distress and insufficient food, more like a dead body or a shadow than a living man.[1] He was followed by the Rectors of the University, and by Jacques Lathomus and Ruwart Tapper. A crowd of spectators were present at the scene. The distinguished doctors and other judges took their seats on the platform; the rest sat around them; and the accused was placed in the midst. Silence was proclaimed; and then the president stated the cause of the Assembly, and recapitulated the offences with which the accused was charged. He had been arrested for many great heresies; his chamber had been searched, and prohibited books had been found in great numbers; and he had himself composed many treatises containing heretical opinions, which had been widely circulated. The articles alleged against him were then recited:—

"*First*, he had maintained that faith alone justifies;

"*Second*, he maintained that to believe in the forgiveness of sins and to embrace the mercy offered in the Gospel, was enough for salvation;

"*Third*, he averred that human traditions cannot bind the conscience, except where their neglect might occasion scandal;

"*Fourth*, he denied the freedom of the will;

"*Fifth*, he denied that there is any purgatory;

"*Sixth*, he affirmed that neither the Virgin nor the Saints pray for us in their own person;

[1] It was Paul de Roovere, one of the chaplains of St. Peter's at Louvain, that Ensinas saw; but every word of the description applies literally to Tyndale: I subjoin the original, "Homo, perpusillus, barbâ prominenti, exsanguis, macilentus, dolore atque inediâ pene consumptus, quem tabefactum cadaver aut umbram hominis non hominem jure appellare potuisses."

"*Seventh*, he asserted that neither the Virgin nor the Saints should be invoked by us."

That these and many more articles, judged heretical, could be selected from the writings of Tyndale, no one who has read this biography can be ignorant; these formed a prominent part of the religious teaching which his countrymen had for some years been accustomed to associate with his name, and must of necessity have formed as prominent a part of any accusation of heresy brought against him. On this point, however, we do not need to rely upon inferences even from the best-informed contemporaries; evidence of a more direct kind will speedily be produced.

According to the customary process of justice then followed, Tyndale was offered the services of an advocate and an attorney, that he might avail himself of every possibility of escape which legal ingenuity could discover during the course of the trial. He declined, however, to employ their services; the hour had come which he had so long anticipated, and he was prepared, with God's help, to act in accordance with the counsel which, three years before, he had given to his "dearly beloved son in the faith," John Fryth. He resolved, therefore, to defend himself; and as the whole process was conducted in writing, some months were occupied in paper warfare between him and the theologians of Louvain. "There was much writing," says Foxe, "and great disputation to and fro between him and them of the University of Louvain, in such sort that they all had enough to do, and more than they could well wield, to answer the authorities and testimonies of the Scripture, whereupon he most pithily grounded his doctrine." Tyndale's part in this discussion has not been preserved, at least has not been recovered; but the reply of his chief antagonist, Lathomus, has been printed among his collected writings, and from this treatise, with the help of a little patience and ingenuity, we are able to give a brief summary of the disputation which issued in Tyndale's condemnation and martyrdom.

It was the old question of justification by faith which had formed the chief theme of discussion, and this was apparently the sole subject of the first treatise which Tyndale wrote in his own defence.

Faith alone justifies before God (*Fides sola justificat apud Deum*). Such was the motto of Tyndale's treatise; and he treated this fundamental assertion as he had already done in his *Parable of the Wicked Mammon*, maintaining that it was the cardinal axiom of the New Testament, and applying it to the question of human merit with the most fearless and rigorous logic.

"The key of the saving knowledge of Scripture," he asserts, "is this: God gives us all things freely through Christ without regard to our works; or in other words, faith in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ, by the grace and works of Christ, and without any regard to any merit or goodness of our works, alone justifies us in the sight of God."

This assertion he perpetually repeated in his treatise as the foundation of all his religious system; he defended it with clear and cogent arguments; and he pushed it to its logical conclusions with a boldness from which many who hold the doctrine of justification by faith would, now-a-days, be inclined to shrink. He denied any distinction between works which preceded justification and those which followed it, as regarded their power to merit anything from God (*vim et efficaciam merendi*); for works which followed justification did not increase the inward goodness of a man, but only manifested it openly.

"The fruit that grows on a tree," he said, "does not make a tree good or bad, it only makes known whether the tree is a good or a bad tree; and works do not make a man good or bad, they only make it plain to other men whether the man who performs them is good or bad. There is an inward justification of a man before God which is by faith alone; works serve only to make his justification known before men;" and it was this distinction, Tyndale maintained, which

explained the apparent discrepancy between the teaching of St. Paul and St. James; for the one spoke of inward justification before God, the other of outward justification before men.

As to *human merit*, Tyndale asserted that it was not only denied by Scripture, in express words, but that it was inconsistent with reason. "How could man merit anything from God?" he asked. "God needs not our works; they confer no benefit upon Him; they are all His gifts, and it is we alone who derive any advantage from them. What claim, therefore, can we have to be rewarded by God for them? The patient who drinks a bitter draught deserves nothing from the physician on that account; he has conferred no benefit upon the physician; it is the patient, in fact, that reaps all the good, how then can he establish any ground of merit with the physician? And if we perform some difficult and disagreeable duty which the Great Physician assigns to us, how can we thereby merit any reward from Him? He is not benefited thereby; it is He that has enabled us to perform the duty, and the performance of it redounds not to His advantage but to ours."

Such were the main topics of Tyndale's defence of his opinions, as they can be gleaned from the refutation of his opponent. Lathomus, the champion of Louvain, replied, in a brief treatise, characterised by singular clearness and by a tone of moderation towards his antagonist which was as laudable as it was rare in those days of fierce debate. To a large extent—much larger than would be quite agreeable to his brother theologians at Louvain—he admitted that he agreed with Tyndale on the subject debated; but he joined issue with him on the question of the merit of good works. Scripture, he maintained, repeatedly spoke of human actions as meriting *reward;* our Lord had taught that the labourers in His vineyard would at last receive their *hire*, and had promised a *reward* in heaven to those who were persecuted for Him on earth; St. Paul had declared that God would render to every

man according to his deeds, he had animated the Galatians by the assurance that in due season they should *reap* if they fainted not, and he had encouraged the Hebrews to bear their trials with patience by having regard to the "great recompense of *reward*." He denied as strongly as Tyndale had done that any amount of good works could in any sense merit justification; but he maintained that in the passages he had quoted, Scripture was speaking of good works done after justification; and these, he asserted, merited the reward of heaven.[1]

His reply to Tyndale's illustration of the tree and its fruit was unwontedly weak; but his treatment of the other illustration, the physician and his patient, is more creditable to his skill as a theological disputant. "If," says he, "the physician in your illustration be a king, and if he has solemnly promised that he will make any one who entrusts himself to be healed by his only son, co-heir with that son, that he will treat him as a friend, that he will admit him to his table and will bestow other blessings upon him simply because it is his good pleasure so to do; in this case the sick man who obeys this law *deserves* the inheritance, and demands it *as of right;* not because, in submitting himself to be cured and in voluntarily taking the medicines to cure him, he does anything that benefits the king, but because he has complied with the express will of the king." "Moreover," he proceeded, "unless you admit the truth of this reasoning you will be unable to defend the merits of the man Christ Jesus, which you so properly preach and magnify; for He came into the world to fulfil the will of the Father, not to confer upon the Father any benefit, for nothing would have been wanting to the Father's happiness if Christ had never become man, and He might have saved man in other ways." It was also derogatory to the justice of God, he objected, to assert that God renders nothing for *good* merits; for in this case God's justice at the great day would be mani-

[1] He says, very concisely, *opera præcedentia non merentur justificationem, opera vero sequentia merentur beatitudinem.*

fested only towards the *bad*, whom He would punish *justly* according to their deserts, whereas the good would be rewarded altogether without any regard to their works.

These are the main positions in Lathomus's reply to Tyndale; and they are enforced and illustrated chiefly by quotations from Scripture, (interpreted, it is true, sometimes in a somewhat peculiar manner); for it is not unworthy of note that the Fathers are very rarely referred to or cited. Lathomus had commenced his reply by enumerating in detail the various points of the controversy on which he was perfectly agreed with Tyndale; and the reader is probably of opinion that by the help of a little care in defining the terms employed, even a still greater amount of unanimity might have been achieved. This, however, was but one of almost innumerable points of difference, practical as well as doctrinal, which separated Tyndale from the Church of Rome.

In replying to Lathomus, accordingly, which he did at considerable length,[1] Tyndale not only re-stated his arguments on faith and good works with fresh illustrations; but entered into the general controversy, and expressed his mind freely on all those great questions which for many years had occupied his thoughts. On the former subject of debate he repeated, in still more explicit terms than before, his fundamental proposition that God the Father gives us all things for Christ so freely, that He gives nothing from regard to any work of ours, whether internal or external.[2]

Instead of conceding anything to Lathomus, or indicating any desire to draw nearer to him in his opinions, he repudiated more forcibly than ever the idea that man, whether before or after justification, could do anything that had merit before God. Such an opinion seemed to him absolutely incom-

[1] *Prolixè*, says Lathomus in his answer.

[2] Tyndale's words had been, "Deus Pater omnia dat ita gratis per Christum, ut nullius operis respectu, sive propter nullum opus internum vel externum quicquam det." I have not thought it necessary to print all that I have gleaned as Tyndale's words from Lathomus, but I have in no case ascribed anything to Tyndale without the fullest warrant.

patible with the relation of dependence subsisting between man and God; it seemed to imply that man could do something without the help of the grace of God, or could perform something more than he was bound to perform towards God. Putting his case in the strongest and boldest manner, he declared that, if God had bestowed upon St. Paul immediately after his conversion all the perfection which his soul now enjoys or will enjoy after the resurrection, and yet had determined that he should still continue in the world and do what he actually did in his career as a teacher, he would not by all his works have *merited* anything in the sight of God, any more than the angels in heaven *merit* anything by their ministering to us in our salvation. "It is the grace of God," he again and again repeated, "that does everything; without Him we can do nothing; it is God that works; we are but the instruments, we deserve no reward for what God does by us, and can claim no merit for it, any more than we should dream of ascribing any merit to the sling and stone and sword with which David slew Goliath." He had no wish, he protested, to wrangle about words; but when Scripture said so plainly that God bestowed upon men eternal life of His free grace; when it was so obviously true that we owed to God everything that we could do, and that He would be inflicting no injustice upon us in refusing to give us eternal life; how could it be with any conscience pretended that man, even after he was justified, could claim heaven as of right, or could suppose that anything he did had any *merit* in God's sight? The word *merit*, as used by his antagonist, was employed, he averred, in a corrupted sense, different from that in which it was customarily used among men, and therefore he called upon Lathomus to define accurately what he meant by *merit*, that his language might no longer deceive his hearers.

Finally, he concludes this branch of his argument with the assertion, "*Works* are the very last things which the law requires of us, and they do not fulfil the law of God; in our work we are always sinning, and our thoughts are impure;

that *charity* which should fulfil the law is colder in us than ice; it is only by *faith*, therefore, that we live whilst we are in the flesh; it is by faith we overcome the world; for this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith in God through Jesus Christ, that His love who overcame all the temptations of the devil shall be imputed to us: the promise, therefore, is of faith, that it may be sure to all believers, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified before God."

The other subjects disputed between Tyndale and the theologians are very briefly indicated by Lathomus; the reader, if he has not entirely forgotten *The Obedience* and *The Practice of Prelates*, will scarcely need to be told what they were, or how Tyndale had expressed himself upon them. *The power of the keys* had been debated; and Tyndale, it seems, had given offence by declaring that those only who possessed charity and the graces of the Christian life could have the power of the keys; and he had even maintained that a layman who showed to a sinner the just sentence of condemnation, and thus made him flee to the grace of God, possessed the power of opening and shutting the kingdom of heaven as truly as any of the clergy. He had maintained that a bishop who, instead of being blameless, was a drunkard, or a striker, or unchaste, either ceased to be a bishop, or at least ceased to have any claim upon the obedience of the laity. The subject of *vows* had been discussed, and fasting, and invocation of the saints, and reverencing the relics of saints, and images, and purgatory, and the supremacy of the pope; and we do not need to be told what opinions Tyndale entertained on such subjects as these; it is superfluous to say that on such topics Tyndale was irreconcilably at variance with those who were now sitting in judgment upon him, with full power of life and death.

The reply of Lathomus to this second defence was by no means equal to his previous production. It is, perhaps, slightly more bitter in its tone towards Tyndale, though

still most commendably free from the prevalent exasperation of theological controversy; but there is also an absence of that closeness of argumentation by which his former work had been distinguished. He does not grapple so closely as before with the question of *merit*, feeling probably that between him and Tyndale there was an irreconcilable difference on this point which argument could not hope to reach; and on the other vast branch of the controversy he contents himself with repeating, in somewhat pompous but unimpressive language, the tenets of the "Catholic, orthodox, Roman Church." So long as the discussion was confined to doctrinal questions a skilful disputant was able to prolong it indefinitely; one text of Scripture could be quoted against another; one system of interpretation could be set in array against another; objections could be started, weak points might be assaulted, difficulties could be evaded; but against such an antagonist as Tyndale it was hopeless to think of defending the manifold practical abuses that had so long deformed the face of religion. Sir Thomas More had not ventured upon the task, and Lathomus was too wise to undertake it. These abuses could not be defended except by violence and force; nothing could be said in their favour except that the Church had sanctioned them, and that the State threatened the severest penalties against any one who presumed to call them in question.

These discussions must necessarily have occupied a considerable time. The process had not begun for some months after Tyndale's arrest, apparently not till after the seizure of Poyntz; and, making due allowance for the customary slow progress of the Council in such proceedings, it seems not improbable that this written discussion occupied the greater part of the commencement of the year 1536. In courts where everything was conducted in writing, the progress was of necessity slow; and no doubt Cromwell's intervention had caused more deliberation than usual in Tyndale's case. Still, all this delay, it must have been evident, could only

protract the sentence without in any way altering its character. It was certain and indisputable from the first that, according to their definition of heresy, Tyndale was a heretic; they could scarcely expect from his antecedent career that he would retract his opinions; and it must, therefore, have been evident from the beginning that the trial could have no other issue than that to which, after long discussion, it was manifestly approaching. Even if his judges had wished to save him there was no loophole of escape: acting as administrators of the law, the case was to them one of perfect simplicity; the sovereign, as the fountain of justice and mercy, might use his prerogative in Tyndale's favour, but subordinate officers had no course open to them except to pronounce that Tyndale had clearly broken the law, and had, in consequence, exposed himself to all its penalties. There was small probability that the Emperor would relent; every year he was waxing more fierce and sanguinary in his treatment of all who differed from the Church: but, if we may judge from the narrative of Foxe, there seems to have been a reluctance on the part of some of those concerned in the trial to proceed to extremities; and but for the persistent instigation of Philips, who, "with constant diligence to and fro, and from Louvain to Brussels and to Vilvorde" kept urging on the process, the prosecution might have been suspended, and the prisoner after some delay might have been released.

The reader will naturally inquire whether in the meantime England had entirely forgotten Tyndale, and whether the authorities had during this long interval made no further effort to obtain his release. And, we fear, it must be replied, that those in England who alone could render him any assistance were so much engrossed in their own affairs, that they allowed matters in the Low Countries to take their own course. Any intervention, except that of Henry or of Cromwell, would have been hopelessly futile; and in those long weary months of the spring of 1536, when Tyndale was

painfully debating with the Louvain Doctors, Henry was flirting with Jane Seymour, and organising schemes for detecting and punishing the real or alleged guilt of Anne Boleyn; and Cromwell, whose master, Wolsey, had been shipwrecked by Henry's former matrimonial difficulties, was too painfully aware of the critical position in which he was placed, to have either leisure or inclination to occupy himself seriously with Tyndale's misfortunes.

One party in England might, indeed, have done something to deliver the Reformer from the unrelenting persecution of Philips. The extreme Romish party, who had doubtless set this bloodhound on the track, and who supplied him with funds, might have withdrawn his resources, and so at once paralysed his efforts; but from them, of course, no such intervention was to be expected. Probably of all the schemes for aiding Tyndale, this last was at once the simplest and the most likely to succeed. It was the malice of an individual that had set in motion the machinery of the law against the Reformer, and if that individual could be cut off from the necessary supply of money, the proceedings might possibly enough have dropped. Cromwell's sagacity had not overlooked this probability. After his communications with the Marquis of Bergen and the Archbishop of Palermo had failed, he had in the close of 1535 dispatched a Cambridge scholar to Louvain to act as a spy upon Philips, and ascertain, if possible, from what sources he was supplied with funds. By means of this agent, Robert Farryngton, it was discovered that "Philips had two benefices and a prebend when he went over the sea;" and the friends whom he left behind doubtless took good care that the revenues of this pluralist were duly transmitted to him on the Continent. It was, therefore, the funds of the Church of England, those funds which the piety of previous generations had consecrated for the perpetual religious benefit of the community, which were employed in doing to death the man who has bestowed upon the people of England the greatest religious blessing

that they enjoy. The same emissary offered to continue his services, but it does not appear that any further use was made of them. Another more effectual method of cutting short the career of Philips was next to be tried, though this also was of no avail to rescue Tyndale.[1]

Philips, it will be remembered, belonged to the party who hated Henry, and, according to Theobald, he had given vent to his feelings both at Louvain and in the Court of the Queen-Regent by denouncing his own sovereign in bitter and violent language as "a tyrant and a plunderer of the country." Such language was treasonable; and by the old arrangement subsisting between England and Germany since the days of Maximilian, Henry might demand the arrest and extradition of any traitor. Letters were, therefore, directed to the magistrates of some of the chief cities in Germany, through which he was likely to pass, describing him as "a most perfidious man, guilty of the most heinous crime of treason," and entreating them to apprehend him and his associates, and send them to the King of England, who would repay all expenses incurred, and liberally recompense them for their trouble.[2] Philips, however, had remained long enough at Louvain to accomplish his treacherous mission; and he contrived to elude the vigilance of the emissaries of his angry sovereign.

[1] I give the part of the letter which refers to the subject:—"Pleaseth it your very good mastership that I might be ascertained by this bearer, my Cousin Richmond, or else by some other at your pleasure, whether it may please you to command me any more service in the matter *that I did show your mastership when I came from Louvain;* and I shall be glad with all my heart to give all diligence to accomplish your pleasure therein, or else that it may please your goodness that I might have licence to depart from Cambridge to my friends." He adds a postscript, by far the most important part of his communication:—"Pleaseth it your mastership, as I am credibly informed, Philips had two benefices and a prebend, when he went over the sea; what order his friends have taken with them since his departing, your mastership may have soon knowledge." The letter was written from Cambridge, January 12; no year is given, but 1536 is clearly the date: it is preserved in the *Chapter-house Papers.* The name of this agent has been hitherto unknown: there is much still to be learned in the State Paper Office, if only the documents were more easily accessible.

[2] Cotton MSS., *Vitellius,* B. XXI.

Vaughan, also, Tyndale's former friend and admirer, was again in Antwerp in the spring of 1536, and was anxious to do what seemed possible to release the illustrious prisoner. Writing to Cromwell from Antwerp, April 13, he says with great urgency, "*If now you send me but your letter to the Privy Council [of Brabant], I could deliver Tyndale from the fire: see it come by time, for else it will be too late.*"[1] The friendly envoy does not, however, state the grounds on which he entertained such pleasing hopes; and we are strongly inclined to believe that he was deluded by his own kindly feelings.

The truth is that a very considerable amount of misapprehension seems to prevail as to Tyndale's death, which it is desirable, if possible, to dispel. To some writers the imprisonment and martyrdom of Tyndale seem to be a stupendous and unprecedented crime, surrounded by inscrutable mystery; and they have inveighed against Henry, and Cromwell, and Cranmer, and Englishmen in general, as guilty of an extreme dereliction of duty which was almost equivalent to being accessory to the great Translator's death. Nothing could be farther from the truth than such a view of the transaction; and, indeed, to any one who will calmly attend to the various features of the occurrence, nothing could stand in less need of explanation than Tyndale's martyrdom.

The laws of the Emperor against heretics were as precise as language could make them; and it was perfectly certain that Tyndale had broken these laws, and was amenable to the penalty that had been enacted as their sanction. Once apprehended, therefore, and subjected to the ordinary course of justice, it is difficult to see what hope of escape was left for him. Henry could not *demand* that he should be delivered up to the English authorities, for his offence had been committed against the laws of the emperor. Indeed, if Tyndale had been sent to England to be tried, his fate would probably have been the same; for he was far in advance of the incipient

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. VII. p. 665.

Protestantism of Henry and his advisers, and he would probably have perished at Smithfield, as his former associate, John Lambert, did two years later for maintaining the same opinions. Cromwell and Cranmer may have felt some considerable sympathy for one who had so successfully laboured in that work of translating Scripture in which they were both so deeply interested; but they were far from sharing Tyndale's views, and far from entertaining for him that high esteem which we have learned to regard as due to his transcendent merits. Our reverence for Tyndale, and our horror for the sanguinary laws which consigned a man to death for his religious opinions, invest his case with a profound interest, which his contemporaries did not in general feel and could not have understood; to them it was simply the case of a good and learned man who had dared to condemn and oppose the teaching of the Church, and who, almost as a matter of course, fell a victim to the familiar rigour of the laws.

Of Tyndale's life during this long imprisonment, Foxe, our sole authority hitherto, has simply recorded that "such was the power of his doctrine and the sincerity of his life, that during the time of his imprisonment, which endured a year and a half [very nearly], it is said, he converted his keeper, the keeper's daughter, and others of his household. Also the rest that were with Tyndale conversant in the castle, reported of him that if he were not a good Christian man, they could not tell whom to trust."

To many writers the amount of liberty thus implied seems so incredible, that they have rejected the story as intrinsically improbable: curiously enough, however, we have the means of establishing the probability of Foxe's statement by evidence which no one will presume to dispute. Ensinas, who was imprisoned for heresy a few years later, makes the very singular complaint that he was somewhat interrupted in his labour of compiling prayers from the Book of Psalms, by the number of visitors who were permitted to see and talk with him.

From the town of Brussels alone he had upwards of eighty visitors, who discussed with him matters of religion, and who, as he quaintly remarks, were at more liberty to consider those matters in that place, because it was a prison, and therefore free from interruption.[1] And the testimony of Ensinas as to the liberty enjoyed in prison is confirmed by the evidence of official papers preserved among the Archives of Belgium.[2] All prisons were probably not so laxly superintended as the *Vrunte*, in Brussels, where Ensinas was confined; but there is, it is thus evident, nothing impossible in Foxe's story, and we are at liberty to believe that the tedium of Tyndale's imprisonment was relieved by kindly Christian intercourse with those around him, on the matters most deeply interesting to his heart.

To this meagre statement of the Martyrologist, however, we are now able to add, for the first time in this country, information of the highest interest from the pen of Tyndale himself. The admirers of the great Translator have long regretted that not a single letter or document of any kind has been ascertained to be in existence, that was unquestionably written with Tyndale's own hand. The industry of a foreign investigator has at length been successful in discovering an original letter which was written by Tyndale himself, and which at once invests the whole narrative of his imprisonment with that "touch of nature" that appeals irresistibly to human sympathies.[3] It would be unfair to the reader to withhold from him Tyndale's own original Latin; and we

[1] *Mémoires d'Ensinas*, Vol. II. pp. 81, 93, 121, etc.

[2] The *Régime de la prison de la Vrunte* is printed in the Appendix to the *Mémoires d'Ensinas, Pièces Justificatives*, Number 5: and taken from the State Papers in Brussels, *Office Fiscal de Brabant*. On the history of the Vrunte, the reader is referred to the admirable *Histoire de Bruxelles*, by Messrs. Henné and Wauters, a work which Englishmen may well envy.

[3] The letter has been found in the Archives of the Council of Brabant, by the learned and indefatigable M. Galesloot. With the kind permission of the ever-courteous M. Gachard, the precious document has been photographed at the expense of Mr. Fry, of Bristol, and a copy, an exact facsimile of the original, which no Englishman but myself has seen, lies before me as I write.

Crede non latere te, vir prestantissime, quid de me statutum sit.
Quam ob, venit tuam dominationem rogatam habeo, idque per dominum Jesum,
ut si mihi per hyemem hic manendum sit, sollicites apud dominum
commissarium, si forte dignari velit, de rebus meis quas habet,
mittere, calidiorem buratum, frigus enim patior in capite nimium
oppressus perpetuo catarro, qui sub testudine nonnihil augetur.
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] hyeme [illegible]
patiens ero, dei expectans voluntatem, ad gloriam gratie domini
mei Jesu Christi, cuius spiritus tuum semper regat pectus Amen

W. Tindalus.

therefore place it here in the text with a literal rendering subjoined. The letter, it may be premised, has neither date nor superscription, but there is not the slightest doubt that it was written at Vilvorde in the winter of 1535, and that it was addressed to the Governor of the castle, who was no other than that very Marquis of Bergen-op-Zoom with whom Cromwell had already interceded in Tyndale's favour.[1]

"Credo non latere te, vir præstantissime, quid de me statutum sit. Quam ob rem, tuam dominationem rogatum habeo, idque per Dominum Jesum, ut si mihi per hiemem hic manendum sit, solicites apud dominum commissarium, si forté dignari velit, de rebus meis quas habet, mittere calidiorem birettum; frigus enim patior in capite nimium, oppressus perpetuo catarro qui sub testitudine nonnihil augetur. Calidiorem quoque tunicam, nam, hæc quam habeo admodum tenuis est. Item pannum ad caligas reficiendas. Duplois [*sic* in original by mistake for *diplois*] detrita est; camiseæ detritæ sunt etiam. Camiseam laneam habet, si mittere velit. Habeo quoque apud eum caligas ex crassiori panno ad superius induendum; nocturna biretta calidiora habet etiam: utque vesperi lucernam habere liceat; tediosum quidem est per tenebras solitarie sedere. Maximè autem omnium tuam clementiam rogo atque obsecro ut ex animo agere velit apud dominum commissarium quatenus dignari velit mihi concedere *Bibliam Hebraicam, Grammaticam Hebraicam, et Vocabularium He-*

"I believe, right worshipful, that you are not ignorant of what has been determined concerning me [by the Council of Brabant]; therefore I entreat your lordship and that by the Lord Jesus, that if I am to remain here [in Vilvorde] during the winter, you will request the Procureur to be kind enough to send me from my goods which he has in his possession, a warmer cap, for I suffer extremely from cold in the head, being afflicted with a perpetual catarrh, which is considerably increased in this cell. A warmer coat also, for that which I have is very thin: also a piece of cloth to patch my leggings: my overcoat is worn out; my shirts are also worn out. He has a woollen shirt of mine, if he will be kind enough to send it. I have also with him leggings of thicker cloth for putting on above; he also has warmer caps for wearing at night. I wish also his permission to have a lamp in the evening, for it is wearisome to sit alone in the dark. *But above all, I entreat and beseech your clemency to be urgent with the Procureur that he may kindly permit me to have my Hebrew Bible,*

[1] Antoine de Berghes, Marquis of Berg-op-Zoom, was appointed Governor in 1530. Adolphe Van Wesele was Lieutenant of the castle.

braicum, ut eo studio tempus conteram. Sic tibi obtingat quod maximè optas modo cum animæ tuæ salute fiat: Verum si aliud consilium de me ceptum [*sic*] est, ante hiemem perficiendum, patiens ero, Dei expectans voluntatem, ad gloriam gratiæ Domini mei Jesu Christi, Cujus Spiritus tuum semper regat pectus. Amen. W. Tindalus."[1]

Hebrew Grammar, and Hebrew Dictionary, that I may spend my time with that study. And in return, may you obtain your dearest wish, provided always it be consistent with the salvation of your soul. But if, before the end of the winter, a different decision be reached concerning me, I shall be patient, abiding the will of God to the glory of the grace of my Lord Jesus Christ, whose Spirit, I pray, may ever direct your heart. Amen. —W. Tyndale."

The picture presented in this letter, of the illustrious Martyr, sitting cold and dark and solitary in the damp cells of Vilvorde during the long cheerless nights of winter, and earnestly soliciting the favour of light, and warm clothing, and above all, of books to solace him, must surely have reminded the reader of the great Apostle of the Gentiles sending for his "cloke and his books, but especially the parchments," to defend him against the damp and the tedium of his gloomy Mamertine dungeon; and it appeals irresistibly to the sympathies of every man who is not utterly destitute of human feelings.

It adds not a little to the interest of this letter, that it silences for ever the idle objection so often repeated by writers who take no trouble to examine into facts, that Tyndale was absolutely ignorant of Hebrew, and was incapable either of reading or of rendering the Old Testament in its original language. To scholars, indeed, that question had long ago been set at rest by the examination of Tyndale's Version of the Pentateuch; and the testimony of Herman Buschius was scarcely needed to assure them, that Tyndale was quite

[1] As this biography has not been produced for philological purposes, I have given Tyndale's letter in the ordinary orthography: I may mention, however, that the original presents scarce any deviation from that above, except in using the single *e* instead of the diphthong *æ*.

sufficiently versed in Hebrew for the work that he had undertaken. Surely, however, after this pathetic request in the Translator's own words, the groundless calumny will disappear for ever from our literature.

We take for granted that the modest requests of Tyndale were acceded to; this much, at least, the Marquis of Berg could scarcely refuse to one for whom Cromwell had interceded; and until the actual business of the trial commenced and occupied all his energies, we may suppose that Tyndale was engaged on what had been the labour of his life, the translation of Holy Scripture into the English language. The Venerable Bede, dictating his translation of St. John on his death-bed, has been deemed a subject worthy of the highest art, a theme for the highest flights of poetry; will no genius be fired to commemorate in verse or on canvas the only worthy pendant which our literary annals present, Tyndale in the gloomy vaults at Vilvorde, toiling bravely to finish his great work? How much he was able to accomplish of his task in the dreary confinement of his prison we have no means of ascertaining with any very definite precision; but there seems no reason whatever for disbelieving the uniform tradition which affirms, that before his death he had completed the translation of the Old Testament to the end of the Books of Chronicles. This part of his work, it is said, was transmitted to his former associate in Antwerp, John Rogers, and was printed by him along with the previous translations by Tyndale of the Pentateuch and the New Testament, in what is usually known as Matthews's Bible.[1] Of all this, direct proof cannot be given; but the presumption in its favour, from evidence both internal and external, is sufficiently strong to warrant its implicit reception.

The trial of Tyndale was, we believe, not begun till the commencement of 1536, and it had been unusually protracted. The process of written attack and defence must of necessity

[1] See Westcott on the subject; I have not entered into the examination of any of the alleged posthumous works of Tyndale.

have occupied a considerable time; and it may have been midsummer before the trial was concluded. The verdict had been foreseen by the judges from the commencement, and was inevitable; but before pronouncing it, we cannot doubt that the question was once again submitted to the supreme authorities; that not only the Regent Mary of Hungary, but the emperor also, were asked to decide whether in this instance the statutes against heretics were to be enforced with full rigour, or whether the prerogative of mercy was to be exercised. Charles and Mary were not ignorant of the interest which Henry and Cromwell felt in Tyndale; and with them it rested to decide whether the prisoner was to be set free, or to die the death of a heretic. They weighed the case doubtless with care, and took into consideration the comparative advantages of the two courses of conduct that were open to them. To pardon a convicted heretic would offend the clergy, and would stultify the legislation of many years against heresy: to give him up to death was to run the risk of offending Henry, or at least of disobliging Henry's potent minister. As a question of interest, the decision was only too likely to be unfavourable to Tyndale, and the consciences of the two supreme authorities would still further incline the verdict against him. No words of mercy came from those with whom the prerogative of mercy was lodged; and nothing remained for the Council of Brabant but to act as the law required.[1]

Sentence of death would, therefore, be pronounced against Tyndale at Vilvorde by the Procureur-General in the usual manner. The exact date of Tyndale's condemnation we have been able to ascertain from the despatch of John Hutton, one of Cromwell's envoys in the Low Countries. Writing from Antwerp on the 12th of August he informs the Secretary, "So it is that on the tenth day of this present the Procureur-

[1] I have searched in vain for the correspondence which *must* have passed between Mary and Charles, but it may yet be discovered and throw light upon this most interesting subject.

General, which is the Emperor's attorney for these parts, dined with me here in the English House, who satisfied me that William Tyndale is degraded and condemned into the hands of the secular power, so that he is very like to suffer death this next week. As to the Articles upon which he is condemned, I cannot as yet obtain [them], albeit I have a grant [a promise], which, once obtained, shall be sent your Lordship by the first."[1]

According to Foxe, Tyndale had a respite of nearly two months between his condemnation and his martyrdom; and one hopes that, after the solemn mummeries of *degradation* were duly accomplished, the calm interval of preparation was not interrupted by the officious ministrations of the priests and confessors who were usually intruded upon condemned heretics, to convince them, if possible, at the last moment, of their errors, and to induce them to recant. Tyndale, it must have been manifest, was not likely to be influenced by such agents, and one would gladly believe, therefore, that he was spared this annoyance, and that he was permitted to prepare himself in peace for that dread ordeal of which he had before said to Fryth, "Let not your body faint; he that endureth to the end shall be saved; if the pain be above your strength, remember, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name I will give it you,' and pray to your Father in that name, and He shall ease your pain or shorten it."

The death which he had to face was not, however, quite so terrible as that of Fryth; by the laws of the Emperor Anabaptists alone were burned alive; and though Tyndale's body was to be consumed, it would not be till after he had been reft of life by a mode of death much more speedy than the painful one of burning. He was to be strangled, and his dead body was then to be burned. Friday the 6th of October was fixed as the day of his execution. The place was, doubtless, some spot on that side of the castle next the town, where it could easily be witnessed from the churchyard and from

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. VII. p. 665.

the walls that ran in front of what is now the *Rue des Moines Blancs*.

No record of the martyrdom has been given by any eye-witness; but the description given by Ensinas of an execution precisely similar may be here quoted, as probably in almost all its details applicable to the case of Tyndale.

"A space was enclosed with palisades, and all were excluded except those who had to play a part in the martyrdom. In the midst of the enclosure was erected a large piece of wood in the shape of a cross as high as a man, and firmly fixed in the ground to the same depth. On the top was an iron chain fixed to the wood, and a hole in which a rope of hemp was inserted: and near the foot was piled an immense heap of brushwood. When all was ready the Procureur-General and the rest of the judges were conducted to the place that was prepared for them in the immediate neighbourhood of the fatal spot. Finally, the prisoner was led out, and was permitted to engage for a few moments in prayer."

"He cried," says Foxe, in the sole detail he has given of Tyndale's death, "at the stake with a fervent zeal and a loud voice, 'Lord, open the King of England's eyes!'"

"This prayer finished, he was immediately led by the executioner to the stake; his feet were bound to the stake; the iron chain which hung from the top was fastened round his neck, along with the hemp rope loosely tied in a noose. The faggots were piled around with quantities of straw, and heaped up till the victim almost seemed enclosed in a little hut. Then, at a signal from the Procureur, the executioner stepped behind and tightened the rope with great force, so as in a few moments to strangle the victim. When life was extinct, the Procureur seized a torch and kindled the pile, which blazed forth with fury, and in a very short space completely consumed the body."[1]

[1] *Mémoires d'Ensinas*, Vol. I. p. 94. It is of the martyrs of Louvain that Ensinas is here speaking, and he adds (what I have omitted) the famous description of Dufief's cruelty: "Videor mihi adhuc habere in conspectu distortum illud

Such was the end of William Tyndale.

"If they shall burn me," he had said eight years before, "they shall do none other thing than that I look for." "There is none other way into the kingdom of life than through persecution and suffering of pain, and of very death, after the ensample of Christ."[1] And now after a long interval the death which he had so long before anticipated had overtaken him; the untiring malice of his enemies had at length succeeded in cutting short his life; but his work was beyond their power. The spot where his ashes rest is unknown; but that work for which he lived and died has, like the seed in the parable, grown up into the mightiest of trees. There is scarcely a corner of the habitable globe into which English energy has not penetrated; and wherever the English language is heard, there the words in which Tyndale gave the Holy Scripture to his countrymen are repeated with heartfelt reverence as the holiest and yet the most familiar of all words. They are the first that the opening intellect of the child receives with wondering faith from the lips of its mother; they are the last that tremble on the tongue of the dying as he commends his soul to God. Assuredly it will not tend to diminish the reverence with which the universal English-speaking people regard their Bible, if they read a little more carefully the life of the heroic and simple-minded man to whose labour the English Bible was chiefly owing, and whose spirit still seems to reside in its grave, impressive sentences.

No laboured peroration is needed to set forth the character and virtues of Tyndale. This biography must have been unsuccessful indeed, if it has not presented a portrait which the reader has long ago recognised as that of a true Christian

crudelissimi hominis os, ex quo flammas spirabat, quàm ipsa fax incensa, horribiliores; faciem truculentam et præ furore ardentem, truces oculos, totum denique corporis habitum, qui latentes animi furias omni gestu et sermone sic representabat, ut vero credam, eo tempore a diabolo obsessum fuisse, cujus instinctu sine ullâ dubitatione agebatur."

[1] *Wicked Mammon* and *Obedience*.

hero. *Heroic* is, in truth, the appropriate epithet for the character of Tyndale; and *heroic* in the noblest and highest sense of that somewhat misused word. One feels instinctively that he was no ordinary commonplace man, no mere scholar, or active, energetic priest. He was no shrewd man of the world, but was ignorant as a child of the ordinary arts by which favour is propitiated and popularity so frequently won. His simplicity, his earnestness, his noble unselfishness, his love of truth, his independence, his clearness and force of mind, his invincible energy and power,—these mark him out as a true hero, one of those great men specially raised up and qualified for a noble work, whose lives always constitute a landmark in the annals of human history.

Of the excellence of his moral character, fortunately, no defence has ever been required. The Procureur-General is reported to have described him as "a learned, good, and godly man;" and friends and enemies, in his own time and in subsequent ages, have with one unvarying consent repeated the same encomium. No voice of scandal has ever been raised against him; and there are no black spots in his life which it is the duty of a biographer to attempt to whitewash.

The extent of his influence upon the Reformation in England was more fully and more justly recognised by his contemporaries than it has in general been by subsequent writers. Sir Thomas More was too sagacious not to perceive that Tyndale was the true pioneer in England of that movement which he regarded with so much aversion. Others had, indeed, anticipated Tyndale in condemning the doctrines and practices of the Church as unscriptural and superstitious, but their voices were feeble and ineffectual; his was the first voice that was raised in accents loud and clear enough to penetrate the ears and touch the hearts of the nation. The violence with which his works were condemned, and the zeal with which they were sought after and burnt by the great ecclesiastical authorities, sufficiently attest the estimate they had formed of the importance of his writings. It would be difficult to name any more

powerful attack upon all that was at the time most generally practised in the Church of Rome than is contained in *The Obedience*, *The Practice of Prelates*, and *The Answer to Sir Thomas More*. Never had the corruptions in doctrine, the abuses in worship, the ignorance and worldliness of the clergy, been exposed with such clearness of argument, such force of language, such vehemence of moral indignation; the impression made was deep, the result was memorable. And, as we have already noticed, his influence was not that of a mere hostile critic, holding up errors and abuses to reprobation and public scorn; a mere inarticulate protest against the sins and vices of the Church would not, however strong, have availed to produce a Reformation in religion. Tyndale not only pointed out with terrible clearness what was wrong, he indicated with equal plainness the only remedies that could meet the emergency. The supremacy of Holy Scripture in all matters of faith, the supremacy of the civil law in all matters of discipline, such were the remedies which Tyndale recommended to his countrymen as the only effectual means of redressing the intolerable grievances under which they were groaning; and these are, in fact, the two pillars on which the Reformation in England was subsequently established.

This, however, was after all but a subordinate part of Tyndale's work; that with which his name will be for ever associated, and for which his memory will be for ever revered, is his translation of Holy Scripture. Of the merits of the English Bible and of its influence upon all English-speaking people who is able adequately to treat? And this English Bible, it must once more be repeated, is the work of Tyndale; is for the greater part exactly what he made it, and in every part speaks in that style which he infused into it. That exquisite felicity of language which has made it dear to the hearts of all classes, which has constituted it a true national treasure, it owes to Tyndale. His translation was no dead piece of learned labour; it was instinct with the life of the man that produced it; it was the Word of God transmitted

through the agency of one to whom that Word was not an outward letter, but the very life of his soul. It is on this account that the individuality of Tyndale is inseparably associated with the English Bible; its tone and spirit have, in a certain sense, come from him; no revision has ever presumed to touch what Tyndale has stamped on it; no progress of scholarship is ever likely to efface from it that which makes it truly Tyndale's work.

It has been reserved for some of his own countrymen to impugn the scholarship of the great Translator. Perhaps, their discovery that a translation whose pre-eminent merit it is that it so closely represents the original, was made by a man incompetent to render from the original, may be esteemed the highest and most curious achievement of literary stupidity in our times. But to state such a preposterous objection is to refute it. Such calumnies can do no injury to the memory of Tyndale: they prove nothing but the ignorance and the recklessness of those who make them. Truth alone can stand the test of time and of research; and the more thoroughly that the life of Tyndale is examined, the more has he hitherto been found to be deserving of the love and veneration of his countrymen. The more that his character and work are investigated, the more conspicuous is his Christian heroism. There is nothing to alloy the admiration with which we regard him, no taint of weakness, no suspicion of selfishness, no parade of pride. Humble and irreproachable in his life, zealous and devoted in his work, beloved by his friends, respected by his enemies, faithful unto death, where among the army of martyrs shall we find a nobler than William Tyndale?

APPENDIX.

I. MR. ANDERSON'S ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST INTRODUCTION OF TYNDALE'S NEW TESTAMENT INTO ENGLAND.

ANDERSON'S *Annals of the English Bible* contributed so substantially to enlarge our knowledge of the early history of the Bible in England, and displayed such a considerable amount of research into materials that had not been previously explored, that the work has justly acquired a very high reputation, and has been extensively used as a sort of literary quarry, from which subsequent writers have borrowed their information without deeming it necessary to subject it to any further scrutiny. And it would betoken at once ingratitude and ignorance to speak with disrespect of Anderson's work, or to overlook the important service which it has rendered to all who, since its publication, have undertaken to prosecute their researches in the same field. At the same time it is useless to deny that the *Annals of the English Bible* labours under several not unimportant defects, which make it impossible to receive the writer's conclusions with implicit faith, or even to feel assured that his quotations and translations can be depended upon as accurate. Anderson was too ready to arrive precipitately at a conclusion on insufficient evidence; and having once satisfied himself that some particular theory was probable, he forthwith assumes that it is certain and indisputable; and thus throughout his book confounds theories with facts, probabilities with certainties, in a manner seriously to detract from the value of his history. It is also evident to any one who follows in his wake, and carefully examines the documents which he professes to quote and to translate, that Anderson's scholarship was deficient, and that he was somewhat careless in deciphering and transcribing manuscripts and other authorities. He knew nothing of German, a great misfortune where several questions of the utmost importance

could not possibly be determined without some acquaintance with that language.[1] His acquaintance with Latin was not such as to enable him to read that language with facility, or to translate it with accuracy;[2] and he lacked the necessary patience without which old and carelessly-written manuscripts can seldom be examined and deciphered to much purpose.

In inquiries such as those with which Anderson's *Annals* are occupied, nothing is more important or more difficult, than the ascertaining of any precise dates to govern the arrangement of events; and it is in this most of all that his habit of hasty theorising has led Mr. Anderson astray. Many minor faults of this kind are noticed in the previous pages; but there is one error which pervades his whole narrative of the years 1524–1528, and which is of such great consequence that it seems desirable to explain at length on what grounds his arrangement is set aside and an entirely different one adopted in this biography.

Anderson commences his history of the year 1526 in the following language: "That interesting period when the Word of God printed in our native tongue was first found in England, had now arrived. It was in January 1526. . . . The earliest importations of these precious volumes would furnish a very curious subject of inquiry. . . . But the materials have never yet been examined and compared, with that regard to accuracy as to names, and succession as to events, which would have brought out some of the finest specimens of faith and fortitude and persevering zeal." He then proceeds to "examine and compare the materials," and it is by this examination that nearly the whole of the dates in his history for several years have been determined.

First of all he quotes from Foxe the articles alleged against Garret, Curate to Dr. Forman, the Rector of All Hallows in Honey Lane, of whom Foxe says, "*About the year* 1526, Master Garret came unto Oxford, and brought with him sundry books in Latin, treating of the Scripture . . . and *Tyndale's first translation of the New Testament in English*, the which books he sold to divers scholars in Oxford." "After he had been there a while, and despatched those books, news

[1] *e.g.*, Whether Tyndale knew German, and how far he was indebted to Luther's translation, are questions really of prime consequence in the *Annals of the English Bible*, to which Anderson was unable to return any intelligent answer.

[2] It is an unpleasant task to expose another's deficiencies, but any one who will take the trouble to read what Mr. Anderson calls a translation of Rinck's letter to Wolsey (*Annals*, I. pp. 202, etc.) will scarcely need any other evidence to convince him of the serious defects of Anderson's scholarship.

came that he was searched for through all London to be apprehended and taken as a heretic, and to be imprisoned for selling those heretical books." All this must have happened very early in January if not before; for after the search in London had proved fruitless, he was searched for in Oxford, where, according to Anderson's theory, he visited one of the students *on the 7th of February*, was taken prisoner on the 9th, escaped again, and was recaptured, and all his friends in the University, including Fryth, were immediately arrested. All this it is assumed happened in 1526; and as it is distinctly specified that he had been searched for in London before he was sought for in Oxford, and moreover that the search in London did not take place till a "while after" he had come to Oxford with Tyndale's Testaments, Anderson is compelled to conclude that the books had arrived in England in the very commencement of 1526; and even the month of January is evidently too late to meet the requirements of the case.

But if the printed Testament was in Oxford in the beginning of January 1526, it must have left Worms at least a month before, in those days of slow locomotion: and as it was scarcely possible that the printing could have been finished in less than three or four months, it follows that Tyndale must have arrived at Worms not later than August 1525. This is, of course, totally inconsistent with the narrative of Cochloeus, who expressly says that "Luther had written to the King" *before* he had made the discovery that Tyndale and Roye were engaged in printing the New Testament at Cologne, and consequently *before* they fled to Worms; and Luther's letter was dated 1st September. But Anderson, compelled by his theory, hints that this was a mistake of memory on the part of Cochloeus (*Annals* p. 59, note 12); and gathering courage as he proceeds, he speaks of English New Testaments as being imported in the end of 1525 (p. 112); and still more boldly declares that Roye left Tyndale at Worms "in the summer of 1525," by which time, of course, the New Testament was finished (p. 138). It was a necessary result of the same theory that all Tyndale's works are considerably antedated; for unfortunately the date of Roye's departure is the only point from which we can calculate the time of their first issue; and Anderson being compelled by his theory to suppose that Roye left Worms in the summer of 1525 is equally compelled to believe in an imaginary edition of *The Wicked Mammon* published in May 1527 (p. 138, note 6). The date of Fryth's arrival on the Continent, also, and in fact, almost every date between 1525 and 1528 is more or less

affected by the theory which he has built upon Garret's apprehension at Oxford.

Now it is peculiarly fortunate that all the materials necessary to illustrate this part of the narrative have been preserved, and are indeed all accessible in print[1], and nothing can be more certain than that it was in 1528 not 1526 that Garret was apprehended. If space allowed, the whole transaction might be printed from contemporary documents of unquestionable authority, but we must content ourselves with a brief outline of the main features of the occurrence, accompanied by such notes "as to succession of events" as may suffice to set the question finally at rest.

As stated in the text (*ante*, p. 158) the clue to the secret distribution of the English New Testament seems to have been in Wolsey's possession about the close of 1527 or the commencement of 1528; and naturally enough it was from Wolsey that the first hint came to arrest Garret. From this point the story may be told in the words of the original actors, and a wonderfully interesting story it is.

Dr. London, Warden of New College, Oxford, writes thus from Oxford, to Longland, Bishop of Lincoln, on the 24th of February:—

"It may please you to understand that Mr. Dean [Dr. Higdon, Dean of Wolsey's College] at his coming home brought to the Commissary [Dr. Cottisford] secret commandment from my Lord Cardinal's Grace, to attach one Mr. Garret lurking at Oxford at one Radley's house, which was greatly suspect of heresy. Upon Saturday last past [February 22nd] the Commissary took him in the said house, and kept him secret in his own chamber, willing next morning early to send him unto my Lord's Grace by one of the proctors and Mr. Standish. As Mr. Commissary was at even-song Mr. Garret picked the lock of Mr. Commissary's door, went immediately to Gloster College[2], and without delay there took a secular scholar's coat and went away with all the speed he might."

This secular scholar was Anthony Dalaber, to whose narrative we shall now turn. Dalaber had known Garret for some time, and in spite of the secrecy observed, they were both aware of the intended search, and had deliberated about the best method of shielding Garret from danger. After some consultation, with other friends in the University, they had agreed that Garret should change his name and go into Dorsetshire, to act as Curate to Dalaber's brother until a

[1] In Foxe, with the valuable documents printed in Appendix to Vol. v. Religious Tract Society's Edition, from the *Chapter-house Papers*.

[2] Now Worcester College.

suitable opportunity occurred for leaving England altogether. In accordance with this resolution Garret had left Oxford in the morning of the Wednesday before Shrovetide, *i. e.*, February 19: but his courage failing him he had returned again on the Friday and was apprehended at Radley's house. Dalaber, ignorant of his friend's return, had moved from St. Alban's Hall to Gloucester College, and was sitting quietly reading one of the prohibited books, when he was startled by a violent knocking at the door of his chamber. On opening it "there was Master Garret as a mazed man," accompanied by a college-servant who had shown him the way to Dalaber's new rooms. In the excitement of the moment Garret revealed the secret of his apprehension and escape in the hearing of the servant, who, of course, subsequently informed the authorities. Entering his friend's chamber, Garret hurriedly told what had occurred, his flight, his return, his apprehension, and how when the Commissary had gone to even-song, "hearing nobody stirring in the College, he put back the bar of the lock with his finger and so came off." It was impossible for him to remain in Oxford, he had no hope but in immediate flight; "and so," writes Dalaber in his beautiful narrative, "with deep sighs and plenty of tears he prayed me to help to convey him away; and so he cast off his hood and his gown wherein he came unto me, and desired me to give him a coat with sleeves, if I had any; and told me that he would go into Wales and thence convey himself to Germany if he might. Then I put on him a sleeved coat of mine, of fine cloth in grain, which my mother had given me. He would have another manner of cap of me, but I had none but priest-like, such as his own was. Then kneeled we both down together on our knees, lifting up our hearts and hands to God our Heavenly Father, desiring Him with plenty of tears so to conduct and prosper him in his journey, that he might well escape the danger of all his enemies, to the glory of His Holy name, if His good pleasure and will so were. And then we embraced and kissed one the other .... and so he departed from me apparelled in my coat." After Garret had left, Dalaber sat down to read that tenth chapter of St. Matthew, which contains our Lord's instruction to His disciples and His forewarning of the treatment they might expect from men; and having carefully concealed his books, he sallied forth to see what was stirring in the University. "I went straight to Frideswide [Wolsey's College] and even-song was begun, and the Dean and other Canons were there in their grey amices: they were almost at *Magnificat* before I came thither. I stood at the quire-door and heard Master Taverner play .... as I thus stood, in

cometh Dr. Cottisford, the Commissary, as fast as ever he could go, bareheaded, as pale as ashes (I knew his grief well enough) and to the Dean he goeth into the choir, where he was sitting in his stall, and talked with him very sorrowfully, what, I knew not; but whereof, I might and did well and truly guess. I went aside from the quire-door, to see and hear more. The Commissary and Dean came out of the quire wonderfully troubled, as it seemed. About the middle of the church met them Dr. London, puffing, blustering, and blowing, like an hungry and greedy lion seeking his prey."

To this "blustering" Dr. London's letter we now return. "The Commissary[1] made as much search as he could, and at the last learned where he escaped, and took the scholar whose coat he had; and [he being] examined, hath confessed his books of heresy written with his own hand, and is in prison. This Monday, the Vigil of St. Matthias[2], the Commissary showed me of this matter, and he and Mr. Dean desired me to help what I could to try out more of this thing. We have this Monday searched Radley's house, and some books Mr. Garret had there left behind him: and some I had at a bookbinder's; . . . and certain other books we had of the scholar which did lend to Mr. Garret his coat," [and found, in fact, that Garret had brought three hundred and fifty-four books with him as per list annexed to the letter in the original]. "Mr. Garret came to Oxford upon Christ's Nativity even, and hath been lurking there ever since. In this little time he hath done much hurt. After this Mr. Garret escaped, the Commissary being in extreme pensiveness, knew no other remedy but this extraordinary, and caused a figure to be made by one expert in astronomy, and his judgment doth continually persist upon this that he fled in a tawny coat south-east-ward, and is in the middle of London, and will shortly to the seaside. He was curate unto the parson of Honey Lane. . . . Anthony Dalaber, the scholar that hath helped to convey Mr. Garret, is marvellous obstinate, and that [what] is gotten of him is with much difficulty; he will not confess of any lecture he had in Oxford but of Mr. Clarke, which, as

[1] The Commissary, as Dalaber has just mentioned, was Dr. Cottisford, who acted in this capacity from Dec. 7, 1527, to August 26, 1532: hence these occurrences could not have taken place in 1526, as Anderson has supposed.

[2] This expression fixes the date of the letter: St. Matthias' Day is February 24th; in 1526 this fell on a Saturday, and the Vigil consequently would be *Friday*, not *Monday*, as Dr. London says: in 1528, being Leap-year, St. Matthias' Day fell on the 25th, which was a *Tuesday*, and the Vigil was *Monday*. This places the date beyond dispute.

he saith, read Paul's epistles in his chamber to him and all such as would come, upon a year past[1]."

Two days later the same correspondent writes again with further intelligence of Garret's doings in Oxford:—"This unhappy Mr. Garret was in Oxford at Easter [April 21, 1527], and after that a season: at his being there he sought out all such as were given to Greek, Hebrew, and the polite Latin tongue, and pretended he would learn Hebrew and Greek; and brought books of new things to allure them. After that he procured a great number of corrupt books, and secretly did distribute them among his new acquaintance in sundry colleges and halls. I fear Mr. Clarke was his caller unto Oxford[2], for he was of his familiar acquaintance. . . . And it is evidently proved that Mr. Clarke hath read in his chamber Paul's epistles to young men and such as were of two, three, or four years' continuance in the University. Would God my Lord's Grace had never been motioned to call him nor any other Cambridge man unto his most towardly College[3]!"

Bishop Longland next takes up the tale, and thus communicates the sad intelligence of the spread of heresy in Oxford to Wolsey:—

"Pleaseth it your Grace to understand since I wrote last unto you of the matters of Oxford, I have had divers knowledges from thence to my heaviness, of such chance of the great corruption of youth there by Master Garret with such erroneous books as he brought thither. . . . There are a marvellous sort of books found which were hid under the earth and otherwise secretly conveyed from place to place. The chief that were familiarly acquainted in this matter with Master Garret was Master Clarke, Master Freer, *Sir Fryth*, Sir Dyott, Anthony Dalaber[4]."

Fryth, therefore, was not at Marburg with Tyndale at this time, as Anderson supposes, but still at Oxford, and for some months after this he was not at liberty to leave England. Longland wrote from his palace at Holborn on the 3rd of March, and was sore distressed at not having heard any report of Garret's apprehension. Garret, however, was already taken, as the next witness will show. John Hooke,

[1] *Chapter-house Papers:* printed in Foxe, Vol. v.

[2] This affords another proof of the date; Clarke was not incorporated at Oxford till Nov. 5, 1525, and hence could not have called Garret to Oxford the Easter before: all this, it is clear, occurred in 1528, not in 1526.

[3] The letter is dated *Ash Wednesday*, which thus fell *after* St. Matthias' Day in the year of the arrest of Garret: now in 1526 Ash-Wednesday fell on the 14th of February, *i.e., before* St. Matthias' Day: in 1528 it fell on February 26th, two days after St. Matthias' Day.

[4] *Chapter-house Papers.*

vicar of All Saints, Bristol, thus hastens to communicate the news of Garret's apprehension to the Commissary, whose remissness had given Garret the opportunity to escape:—

"*Bristolli raptim primo die Martii, post vesperas*," [At Bristol in haste, the first day of March after even-song,] "Pleaseth it you to understand that by the diligence and effectuous means of Mr. Wilkins, chapman of Bristol, father-in-law to Mr. Cole, one of your proctors, *Mr. Garret was taken* in a little town called Bedminster, a mile from Bristol, the last night before this writing [*i. e.* Feb. 29, as we reckon,] upon suspicion of heresy. Whereupon the said Mr. Wilkins and I resorted to him this day; where we heard him examined before one of the Justices of the Peace of Somersetshire, to whom he openly confessed that his name is Thomas Garret, priest, Master of Arts and Fellow of Magdalen College in Oxford, and that he brake out of your chamber with everything as ye writ in your late letter to me directed[1]." Poor Garret found himself so closely watched that he had no chance of escape; the authorities at all the outports had been warned, he was dogged at every turn, and at length hunted down just outside the city of Bristol, where the Mayor was on the look-out for him.

There is no link wanting, it will be seen, in the chain, and if necessary the story might be continued still further by the testimony of the same witnesses and of others of equal authority[2]; what has been here for the first time presented in a connected form, proves beyond possibility of further dispute, that the occurrences at Oxford belong to the year 1528, not to 1526, as Anderson has erroneously maintained. The sequel of Garret's story may best be given in the picturesque language of Froude:—"The brethren at Oxford were soon dispersed: some were sent home to their friends—others, Anthony Dalaber among them, were placed on their trial, and, being terrified at their position, recanted, and were sentenced to do penance. Ferrars was brought to Oxford for the occasion, and we discern indistinctly (for the mere fact is all which survives) a great fire at Carfax; a crowd of spectators, and a procession of students marched up High-Street with fagots on their shoulders, the solemn beadles leading them with gowns and maces. They were taken three times round the fire, throwing in each first their fagot, and then some one of the offending books, in token that they repented and renounced their errors. Thus was Oxford purged of heresy. The state of innocence,

[1] *Chapter-house Papers.*

[2] *e.g.*, Archbishop Warham, whose letter of March 8th is incorrectly assigned by Anderson to 1526, and still more incorrectly by Sir Henry Ellis to 1521.

which Dr. London pathetically lamented, was restored, and the heads of houses had peace till their rest was broken by a ruder storm[1]."

We assume, therefore, as certain and indisputable, that it was not till 1528 that Garret was arrested at Oxford; and as the whole theory of the arrival of the New Testament in January, 1526, or even December, 1525, rests exclusively upon the case of Garret, it is thus entirely demolished. If this were merely an instance of a conflict of one modern theory with another, it might be objected that too much time has been devoted to it; but in truth the matter is of much more serious consequence. The great fault of the *Annals of the English Bible* is, that it has set up modern theories in opposition to ancient facts; and everything is of consequence that tends to confirm the veracity of the older authorities, and thus to establish the truth of history. Mr. Anderson's theories about Tyndale's residence in Hamburg, his ignorance of German, his never having met Luther, etc., are theories adopted in the face of all ancient testimony—they are little better than fancies; and when these are received, as they have been by subsequent writers as probable or as ascertained facts, a serious injury is inflicted on the credibility of history, conjecture is elevated above testimony, and the inferences of a modern theorist are valued above the evidence of a contemporary witness. It is for this reason that the question has been investigated in detail; and as truth is always consistent and harmonious, we have not only shown that there is no reason for believing that the New Testament was in Oxford in January, 1526, but, what is of far more importance, have shown that there is no reason for discrediting the evidence of Cochloeus as to the time when Tyndale was compelled to leave Cologne for Worms. We have shown in fact that there is no necessity for doing violence to the words of those contemporaries who have left a record of the proceedings of Tyndale's life, that, on the contrary, what they have stated is in exact accordance with all that has since been discovered.

One other argument of Anderson may also here be appropriately answered, as it is introduced by him apparently to corroborate his theory of the early circulation of the English Testament. Henry VIII., in the preface to the English edition of his answer to Luther's letter of September 1st, 1525, after alluding to the translation of the New Testament into English, "as well with many corruptions of that holy text, as certain *prefaces* and other *pestilent glosses in the margin*," declared for the information of his "dearly beloved people"

[1] Froude, Vol. II. p. 70.

that, "with the deliberate advice" of Wolsey and others, he had determined "the said untrue translation should be burned." "Here then," says Anderson, anxiously seeking for confirmation of his theory, "was evidently Tyndale's quarto New Testament, with glosses, and *denounced so early as the 20th of March*, 1526." To prove this curious theory he remarks[1] that while the Latin edition of Henry's reply had no date, "so eager was the King, that it had been translated into English, and by himself . . . In the English edition the King's answer begins thus: 'Your letters written the first September we have received the 20th day of March.'" Evidently, therefore, Anderson believes that, on the very day on which Henry received Luther's letter, he wrote a reply to it in English, denouncing the New Testament; for only on this supposition could it be inferred that the book had been denounced so early as the 20th of March. That Henry should have replied to a Latin letter by issuing an English answer, addressed to his subjects rather than to Luther, is, on the face of it, sufficiently incredible; but what is still more extraordinary is, that on the very same page in Herbert's *Ames*, on which Mr. Anderson found the extract from Henry's preface which he has printed, he might have found an account of the matter by Henry himself which totally contradicts all the theories advanced in the *Annals*. Henry proceeds: "We had intended to leave Luther to his lewdness, without any further writing; yet, for the frustrating and avoiding [making void] of his malicious fraud, whereby he intendeth to abuse the world into a false opinion of our favour toward him, we letted not eftsoons to write him an answer of his, more subtle than either true or wise writing. *After which letter written and sent him*, sith we perceived and considered farther, that he had by sundry false inventions laboured to sow some of his venomous seeds among you our well-beloved people . . . we therefore . . . have of our especial favour toward you *translated* for you, and given out unto you as well his said letter written to us as our answer also made unto the same[2]." So that, according to Henry's own statement, his English translation was not made till his Latin reply to Luther was written *and sent;* and we know, from the "State Papers," that it was not sent at the end of August, and indeed it seems probable that it was not dispatched till the month of November[3]. So

[1] *Annals*, Vol. I. p. 113, notes 25 and 26.

[2] Dibdin's Edition of Herbert's *Ames*, Vol. II. p. 488.

[3] See *State Papers*, Vol. I. pp. 173–175; also in Cotton MSS., *Vitellius*, XXI, Sir John Wallop to Wolsey, I find the following, date November 30, 1526: "I have

much for Mr. Anderson's inference, which is again a setting up of modern theory against ancient fact.

I have said nothing of the occurrences at Cambridge in 1526, because there is no evidence to show that Tyndale's New Testament was then at Cambridge: in truth the affair is already perfectly well known, and had nothing whatever to do with the English Bible[1].

II. FLEMISH DOCUMENTS.

1. The Escape of Poyntz.

Archives du Royaume de Belgique. Chambre des Comptes, No. 21,719.

Rekenninge Loys Van Heylwygen radt ordinaris ons Heeren des Keysers ende Ontfanger van den exploicten, penen ende amenden verschenen in Zynder Majesteits Raidt van Brabant, van alle 't gene dat hy ontfangen, ende unytgegeven heeft zyndert den iersten dach van Octobri anno xv^{c} xxxv., totten lesten dach van Septembri anno xv^{c}xxxvij. incluys: welcke rekenninge gemaect is in ponden, stuuvers, ende deniers, Artois.

Folio xi. [Ontfanck] Van Janne Baers, die midts zeekeren mesuse ende negligentien, by hem gecommitteert in 't dewaeren van eenen gevangenen, die geacuseert was van Luterye, genompt *Thomas Poincts*, Ingelsman, unytgebrooken ende ontloopen, dyen hy hadde ten bevele van den Procureur-Generael aenverdt te bewaerene, dairaff hy hadde verworffven remissie belast mit amende civile, soe es dezelve amende getaxeert by den Raide, xiiij. Julii, totter sommen van lxxx.£ gr..... lxxx. £.

Translation.

Accounts of Louis Van Heylwygen, Counsellor in ordinary of the Emperor, and receiver of the escheats, fines, and amends pronounced in His Majesty's Council of Brabant, of all that he has received and expended from the first day of October 1535, to the last day of September 1536, inclusive; which account is made in pounds, shillings and pence Artois.

delivered the King's Highness' letter to Sir Herman Rinck, *with the two packets of Luther's matters*," the packets being addressed to the Duke of Saxony and the Archbishop of Mayence; and in the same volume is a letter from Rinck to Henry assuring him that he had sent the letters to the proper quarters by trusty servants.

[1] See Demaus' *Life of Latimer*, p. 50, etc.

Fol. xi. Received from John Baers for certain carelessness, abuse, and negligence committed by him in keeping a prisoner who was accused of Lutheranism, named *Thomas Poyntz*, an Englishman, broken out and escaped, whom he had received to keep by the orders of the Procureur-General, of which [negligence] he had received forgiveness charged with *amende civile*, which *amende* has been taxed by the Council, July 14, to the sum of eighty pounds, *livres de gros.* .....£80[1].

2. BILL OF THE LIEUTENANT OF THE CASTLE OF VILVORDE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF TYNDALE DURING HIS IMPRISONMENT.

Archives de Belgique: Chambre des Comptes, No. 19,622.

Rekenninge meester Lodewyck Van Heylwygen van de geconfisqueerde goeden van den Luteranen ende quaden Secten, beghinnende vanden jaere xv^{c}xxxiii., ende eyndende anno xv^{c}.....

Fol. viii. Vuytgheven in vacatien ende andere costen van justicien van Lutheranen.

Adolff van Wesele, ter saken van vacatien by hem gedaen soe in 't bewaeren van zekeren gevangenen, genoempt *Willem Tintalus*, Lutriaen. als van synen verleegde penningen, daerinne gedaen ende verleeght ten versuecke van den Procureur-Generael van een jaer hondert vyffendertich daigen te xl s. t'sdaichs blyckende byder taxatien, assignatie, ende quitancie daertoe dienende, soe hier...cii. £

TRANSLATION.

Account of Master Ludwig Van Heylwygen of the confiscated goods of the Lutherans and heretical sects beginning from the year 1533, and ending in 15—

Fol. viii. Expenses in vacation and other expenses in affairs of justice of the Lutherans.

Paid to Adolph Van Wesele on account of the business done by him as well in keeping of a certain prisoner named *William Tyndale*, a Lutheran, as for his money expended, done and expended therein at the request of the Procureur-General, for a year and one hundred and thirty-five days, at forty stivers the day, as appears by the taxation, assignment and quittance pertaining thereto, the sum of.. ...£102[2].

[1] I express my obligation for the translations to the kindness of my friend M. Leopold Van Hollebeke of the State Paper Office, Brussels.

[2] Forty stivers were equal to five shillings of English money; and it is worth noticing that five shillings a day was the cost, according to Foxe, of Poyntz' maintenance in prison. This included not merely the expense of providing the prisoner with food, but also the expenses of the guards who were set to watch him.

3. EXPENSES CONNECTED WITH THE TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF TYNDALE, AND DISTRIBUTION OF MONEY TO THOSE WHO WERE ENGAGED THEREIN.

Archives de Belgique: Chambre des Comptes, No. 19,662.

Fol. viii. verso. Den Procureur-Generael van Brabant voer hem selven cxxviii.l: viii.s: vi.d; als voer meesteren Ruwart Tapper, decken van Sinte Peters tot Loevene, Jacques Lathomi, Jan Doye, canonicken aldaer, alle docteurs inder Godtheyt, Willem van Caverschoen, dragende voer hem lieden cxlix.l: Godevaert de Mayere liv.l: Chaerle T'Serraets v.l: viii.s: Thibault Cotereau vi.l: vi.s: Meester Jacop Boonen x.l: x.s: raiden in Brabant: Meester Hendrick Vander Zypen iii.l: xii.s: Marcellis Van Immerseel iv.l: x.s: Peeter de Brier vi.l: x.s: Cornelis Vander Bruggen ii.l: Hendrick Van Pel [len?] x.l: x.s: Bertolomeus Vander Broecke, Nicolaes Borreman, Jan Vander Biest ende Dierick Cappellemans vi.l: xv.s, executeurs ende boeden [vanden] raide, die gevacheert hebben, ter ordonnantien vander Coninginnen, soe sy seggen, int vervolgende vander saken byden voirscreven Procureur gehadt tegen heeren *Willemme Tindalus*, priestere, gevangen Lutriaen, ende merten vyer [a clerical error for metten vyer[1]], tot Vilvorden geexecuteert, als qualicken gevuelen inden heeligen Kersten geloeff, soe dat hy daer tot Vilvorden ende elders hebben gevacheert op diversche daigen, nairder begrepen in heur declaratie van vacatien blyckende, dragende alle de selve vacatien ter sommen van m.c xii.l: ix.s: vi.d, ende darenboven noch totter sommen van xvi.l noch tot behoeff vander docteurs alliene, blyckende 't selve byder declaratien, taxatie ende assignatie, quitancie daer toe behoorende, 't samen.....iv.c vii.l: ix.s: vi.d

TRANSLATION.

Paid to the Procureur-General of Brabant for himself £128 8s. 6d.; also for Mr. Ruwart Tapper, Dean of St. Peter's at Louvain, Jacques Lathomus, Jan Doye, canons there, all Doctors in theology, William Van Caverschoen, amounting for them all to £149: to Godfrey de Mayere £54; Charles T'Serraets £5 8s.; Theobold Cotereau £6 6s.; Mr. Jacob Boonen £10 10s.; Councillors in Brabant: to Mr. Henry Vander Zypen £3 12s.; to Marcellis van Immerseel £4 10s.; Peter

[1] "Hereby hangs a tale." The present document having been somewhat hurriedly transcribed some years ago, this passage was misunderstood as if it meant that along with Tyndale another person called *Martin Vyer* had also been put to death. A new victim was thus added to the martyrology of the Low Countries which, alas! stands in little need of additions to its terrible calendar. The incident affords a curious illustration of the simple manner in which grave mistakes may arise

de Brier £6 10s.; Cornelius Vander Bruggen £2; Henry Van Pellen £10 10s.; Bartholomew Vander Broecke, Nicolas Borreman, Jan Vander Biest and Dierick Cappellemans £6 15s.: executioners and messengers of the Council, who have been engaged, by the ordinance of the Queen [Mary of Hungary] as they say, in prosecution of the process directed by the said Procureur-General against William Tyndale, a priest, a Lutheran prisoner, and executed by fire at Vilvorde for entertaining certain wicked opinions touching the Holy Catholic faith; so that they have been occupied at Vilvorde and elsewhere on different days, as appears from the contents of their declaration of their engagements, amounting for the said engagements to the sum of £312 9s. 6d., and over and above to the sum of £16 for behoof of the Doctors only: this appearing from the declaration, taxation and assignment and receipt thereto belonging in all to .....£407 9s. 6d[1].

III. ADDENDUM.

On the New Testament of 1535.

One point connected with this New Testament has been accidentally omitted in the description given in the text, pp. 378–380. No copy of that edition has yet been discovered with a title-page and imprint; and it is, therefore, uncertain where or by whom it was printed. I believe, however, that it was printed by Vorstermann in Antwerp. A careful comparison of the mutilated Testament of 1535 in the British Museum with Vorstermann's Dutch Bible, printed the year before, shows that most of the ornamental letters, the small capitals, and the headings of the books used by Tyndale occur also in Vorstermann. The handsome ten-line initial P which stands at the commencement of St. Paul's Epistles in both works, would almost alone suffice to determine this point. It is, moreover, to be remembered that, as has been already shown, Tyndale had previously had dealings with Vorstermann, from whom he purchased (see p. 217) the blocks which were used for illustrating the Pentateuch, and I believe also some of the type used for printing that work. On the whole, therefore, the interesting New Testament of 1535 may, with little hesitation, be assigned to the press of Vorstermann.

[1] I do not pretend to understand the mysteries of Ludwig van Heylwygen's bills; but I have no doubt they were all correct or they never would have been paid.

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THE END.

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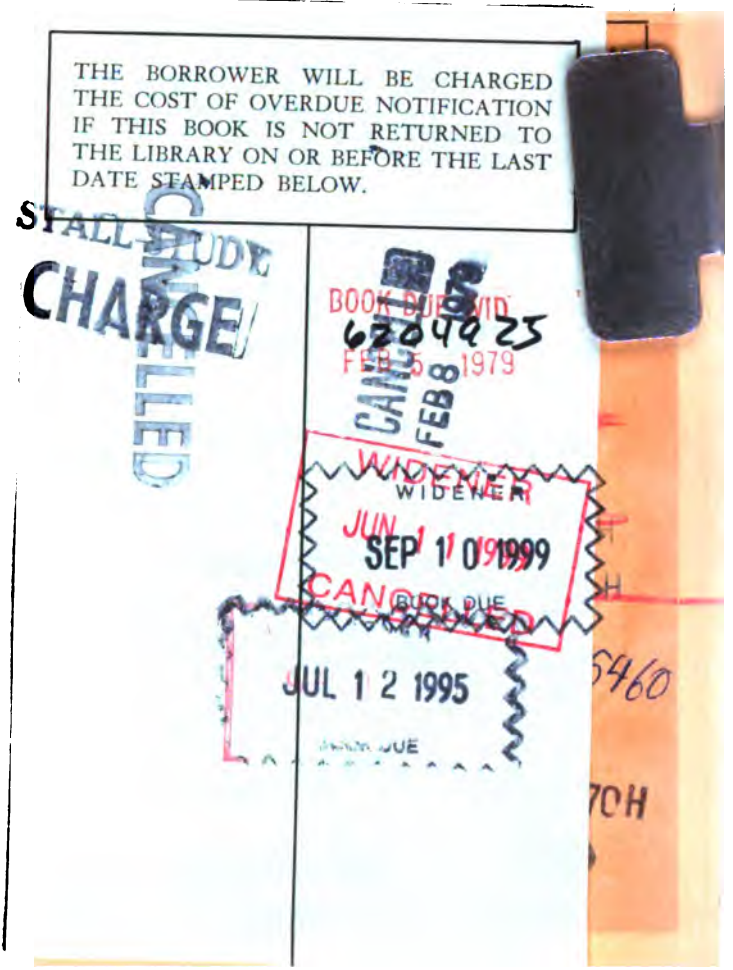
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